

JOHN METCALF AGED 79.

Drawn by J. R. Smith.

Published as the Act directs Aug.t 31. 1793 by E.d R. Peck York



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THE

LIFE

OF

JOHN METCALF,

COMMONLY CALLED

Blind Jack of Knaresborough.

WITH

Many Entertaining ANECDOTES of his EXPLOITS in *Hunting, Card-Playing, &c.*

Some PARTICULARS relative to the Expedition againſt the REBELS in 1745, *IN WHICH HE BORE A PERSONAL SHARE;*

AND ALSO

A Succinct ACCOUNT of his various CONTRACTS for Making ROADS, Erecting BRIDGES, AND OTHER UNDERTAKINGS,

IN

Yorkſhire, Lancaſhire, Derbyſhire, and Cheſhire;

Which, for a Series of Years, have brought him into PUBLIC NOTICE, as a moſt

EXTRAORDINARY CHARACTER.

EMBELLISHED WITH

A STRIKING HALF-LENGTH PORTRAIT.

YORK:

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1795.

[*Entered at Stationers' Hall.*]

BRITISH MUSEUM

ADVERTISEMENT.

TO a generous public little apology will be neceſſary for offering to their patronage the Story of an Individual, who, under circumſtances the moſt depreſſing in their nature, has been, for a conſiderable part of a long life, their aſſiduous and uſeful ſervant.

The Blind, in all ages and countries, have engaged, in a peculiar degree, the ſympathy of mankind;—and, where original poverty has been annexed to their misfortune, it has been eſteemed the utmoſt exertion in their favour, to enable them to miniſter to the amuſement of ſociety, as the only means for keeping them independent of it: To this general rule, however, a ſurpriſing exception is here ſhewn; and it is fortunate for the credibility of this little piece, that it is given to the world during the life-time not only of its HERO,

but of many others who were witneſſes of the various extraordinary *facts* it contains.

It is fit, however, to notice the diſadvantages under which it now makes it appearance;—and which, from circumſtances, were unavoidable: The perſon whoſe taſk it was to render it, in ſome degree, fit for the preſs, had much difficulty to encounter in arranging the dates, ſcarce any attention having been paid to chronological order; and the various anecdotes having been ſet down, as the recollection of them aroſe in the mind of the narrator, by an amanuenſis wholly unqualified for the purpoſe, and given in a language intelligible to thoſe only who are well acquainted with the Yorkſhire dialect.—To thoſe inaccuracies was added, a literal *diſreſpect of perſons*; the firſt and third being indiſcriminately uſed throughout. To avoid conſtantly-recurring egotiſms,

egotiſms, the preference is here given to the third perſon; though it is feared even that will be found too often in the proper name, where it might have been, in many inſtances, ſupplied by the pronoun.——But a long abſence having neceſſarily ſuſpended the attention of the Editor, and the deſire for publication before the cloſe of the Harrogate ſeaſon being urgent, he is not allowed time to correct his own errors. For the ſame reaſon, the part containing an account of the ſhare which Metcalf bore under the late Colonel Thornton, in his expedition againſt the rebels; his various undertakings as a road-maker, &c. have received little other correction than what could be given by interlineation. Throughout, however, not the leaſt violence is done to the facts; to inſure the purity of which, the M. S. has been read over to Metcalf himſelf, and corrected by his deſire, wherever any little accidental error has appeared.

Though

Though it was abſolutely neceſſary to bring the ſtyle into ſomething like grammatical order, and to purge it of barbariſms, yet pains have been taken to preſerve its ſimplicity; and in ſome inſtances, where a few ſentences of dialogue are introduced, the original words remain. Imperfect as it is, a hope is nevertheleſs entertained that it will prove amuſing; and happy ſhall the Author of its Apology be, if the profits ariſing from the ſale ſhall prove of ſufficient value to ſmooth the decline of a life, which, though marked by eccentricity, has not been ſpent in vain.

THE

LIFE

OF

JOHN METCALF.

JOHN METCALF was born at Knaresborough, on the 15th of Auguſt, 1717. When four years old, he was put to ſchool by his parents, who were working people, and continued at ſchool two years: He was then ſeized with the ſmall-pox, which rendered him totally blind, though all poſſible means were uſed to preſerve his ſight.

About ſix months after recovering from the ſmall-pox, he was able to go from his father's houſe to the end of the ſtreet, and return, without a guide; which gave him

A much

much ſpirit and ſatisfaction.—In the ſpace of three years he was able to find his way to any part of the town of Knareſborough; and had begun to aſſociate with boys of his own age, going with them to ſeek birds' neſts, and for his ſhare of the eggs and young birds he was to climb the trees, whilſt his comrades waited at the bottom, to direct him to the neſts, and to receive what he ſhould throw down; and from this he was ſoon able to climb any tree he was able to graſp. He would now ramble into the lanes and fields alone, to the diſtance of two or three miles, and return. His father keeping horſes, he learned to ride, and in time became an able horſeman, a gallop being his favourite pace. His parents having other children, at the age of thirteen had John taught muſic, at which he proved very expert; though he had conceived more taſte for the cry of a hound or a harrier, than the ſound of any inſtrument.

A gentleman at Knareſborough, of the name of Woodburn, was maſter of a pack of hounds:—This gentleman encouraged

Metcalf

Metcalf very much, by taking him to hunt with him, and was always very desirous of his company. Metcalf kept a couple of very good hounds of his own.

Mr. Woodburn's hounds being seldom kennelled, Metcalf used to take several of them out secretly along with his own, about ten or eleven o'clock at night, (the hares being then feeding); but one of the young hounds happening to worry a couple of lambs, it caused him to discontinue that practice.

When about fourteen years old, his activity of limbs, and the good success with which his exploits were usually attended, consoled him so greatly for the deprivation of sight, that he was lead to imagine it was in his power to undertake any thing, without danger: the following adventure, however, caused him to alter his opinion of its value.

There happened to be a plumb-tree a little way from Knaresborough, where there had been a house formerly.—One Sunday, Metcalf and his companions (who were skilled in

matters of this ſort) would go there, to get ſome of the fruit; in theſe caſes, Metcalf was always appointed to aſcend, for the purpoſe of ſhaking the trees. He was accordingly ſent up to his poſt; but in the height of the buſineſs, his companions gathering below were ſuddenly alarmed by the appearance of the owner of the tree, and prepared to quit the ground with all expedition:—Metcalf thus left to himſelf, ſoon underſtood how matters were going, though the wind was high, which prevented him from hearing diſtinctly; and being inclined to follow his comrades, in making his retreat he fell headlong into a gravel-pit belonging to Sir Harry Slingſby, and cut a large gaſh in his face, without, however, receiving any other injury than a ſtun which for ſome time hindered his breathing, and kept him motionleſs on the ground.——His father being rather ſevere, Metcalf was afraid to go home, leſt his wound ſhould lead to a diſcovery of the prank he had been engaged in.

Soon

Soon after this, (though not eaſily diſmayed) he and ſome other boys were completely alarmed:—The church-porch at Knareſborough being the uſual place of their meeting, they one night between eleven and twelve o'clock aſſembled there; Metcalf being generally the chief projector of their plans: They determined to rob an orchard; which having done, they returned to the church-porch to divide their booty. Before their return, a circumſtance had happened to which they were ſtrangers, but to the diſcovery of which the following little incident led, though not immediately: There being a large ring to the church-door, which turned for the purpoſe of lifting the latch, one of the party took hold of it, and, by way of bravado, gave a loud rap; calling out, "*A tankard of ale here!*" A voice from within anſwered, very loudly, "*You are at the wrong houſe.*" This ſo ſtupified the whole covey, that none of them could move for ſome time. At length, Metcalf ſaid, "Did you not hear ſomething ſpeak in the

church?" Upon this, they all took to their heels, and ran till they got out of the church-yard, Metcalf running as faſt as any of them. They now held a conſultation on the ſubject of their fright, all equally wondering at the voice, and none able to account ſatisfactorily for it—One ſuppoſed that it might have been ſome brother wag, who had put his mouth to the key-hole of the North door; but to this it was objected, that the reply was too diſtinct and too ready to have come in that way. At length, however, their ſpirits being a little raiſed, they ventured again down the flagged pavement into the church-yard; but when they came oppoſite to the church, they perceived a light, ſo great as inclined them to believe that the church was on fire. They now re-entered the church-porch, and were nearly determined to call the parſon; when ſomebody within lifting the latch and making a great noiſe, they again diſperſed, terrified and ſpeechleſs. One of the party, (whoſe name was Clemiſhaw) a ſon of the ſexton, ran home, and in a deſperate fright got into bed

bed with his mother; all the reſt, at the ſame time, making the beſt of their way.

The cauſe of this panic was as follows:— An old lady, wife of Dr. Talbot, (who had for many years enjoyed the living of Spofforth) dying, and her relations, who lived at a great diſtance, being deſirous to arrive before her interment, ordered the body to be kept; this being too long the caſe, and the neighbours perceiving a diſagreeable ſmell, a requeſt was ſent to the Rev. Mr. Collins, who ordered the ſexton to be called up to dig the grave in the church immediately: the ſexton had lighted a great number of candles: ſo much for the ſuppoſition of the church being on fire; and the grave-digger was the perſon whoſe voice had ſo terrified the apple-merchants, when they knocked. Such, however, was the impreſſion, that pranks of this nature were not repeated.

About the year 1731, Metcalf being then fourteen years of age, a number of men and boys made a practice of ſwimming in the

the river Nidd, where there are many deeps convenient for that purpoſe.—Metcalf reſolving to learn that art, joined the party, and became ſo very expert, that his companions did not chuſe to come near him in the water, it being his cuſtom to ſeize them, ſend them to the bottom, and ſwim over them by way of diverſion.

About this time, a ſoldier and another man were drowned in the above deeps: the former, it was ſuppoſed, was taken with the cramp; the latter could not ſwim. Metcalf was ſent for to get up the bodies, and at the fourth time of diving ſucceeded in bringing up that of the ſoldier, which, when raiſed to the ſurface, other ſwimmers carried on ſhore; but life had quite left it. The other body could not then be found.

There are very frequent floods in the river Nidd; and it is a remarkable fact, that in the deep places, there are eddies, or ſome other cauſes of attraction, which will draw to the bottom any ſubſtance, however light, which comes within their ſphere of action. Large

pieces

pieces of timber were often ſeen to be carried down by the floods; theſe, on coming over the deep places, were ſtopped for the ſpace of a moment, and then ſunk. Upon theſe occaſions, Metcalf would go down and with the greateſt eaſe fix ropes to the wood, which was drawn up by ſome perſons purpoſely ſtationed on the banks.

In the year 1732, one John Barker kept an inn at the Weſt end of the High Bridge, Knareſborough. This man was a manufacturer of linen cloth, and uſed to bleach his own yarn. At one time, having brought two packs of yarn to the river to waſh, he thought he obſerved a number of wool-packs rolling towards him; but on a nearer view it proved to be a ſwelling of the current, occaſioned by a ſudden and very violent rain in the neighbourhood. He had not time to remove his yarn, ſo that it was ſwept away, and carried through the arches of the bridge, which ſtands on a rock. A little below there is a piece of ſtill water, ſuppoſed to be about twenty-one feet in depth: as ſoon as the

yarn

yarn got to this, it ſunk, except a little which caught the ſkirts of the rock in going down. Metcalf being intimate with Barker, and calling at his houſe a few days after the accident, found him lamenting his loſs. Metcalf told him that he hoped to recover his yarn for him, but Barker ſmiled at the ſuppoſed abſurdity of the propoſal: finding, however, that his friend was reſolved on a trial, he conſented. Metcalf then ordered ſome long cart-ropes to be procured, and fixing a hook at one end, and leaving the other to be held by ſome perſons on the High Bridge, he deſcended, and hooking as much of the yarn as he could at one time, he gave orders for drawing up. In this way the whole was recovered, with very little damage.

Some time after this, Metcalf happened to be at Scriven, at the houſe of one Green, an innkeeper.—Two perſons then preſent had a diſpute concerning ſome ſheep which one of them had put into the penfold. The owner of the ſheep, (one Robert Scaif, a Knareſborough man, and a friend of Metcalf's) appeared

appeared to be ill treated by the other party, who wiſhed to take an unfair advantage. Metcalf perceiving that they were not likely to agree about the damages, bade them good night, ſaying he was going to Knareſborough, but it being about the dead time of night, he was firmly reſolved to do a little friendly buſineſs before he ſhould get home. The penfold being walled round, he climbed over, and getting hold of the ſheep one by one, he fairly toſſed them over the wall: the difficulty of the ſervice increaſed as the number got leſs, not being ſo ready to catch;—he was not, however, thereby deterred, but fully completed the exploit.

On the return of day, the penfold door being found faſt locked, great was the ſurpriſe on finding it untenanted, and various the conjectures as to the rogue or rogues who had liberated the ſheep; but Metcalf paſt unſuſpected, and enjoyed the joke in ſilence.

He continued to practice on the violin, until he became able to play country dances.

At

At Knareſborough, during the winter ſeaſon, there was an aſſembly every fortnight, at which he always attended, and went beſides to many other places where there was public dancing; yet, though much employed in this way, he ſtill retained his fondneſs for hunting, and likewiſe began to keep game cocks. Whenever he went to a cock-pit, it was his cuſtom to place himſelf on the loweſt ſeat, and always cloſe to ſome friend who was a good judge, and who, by certain motions, enabled him to bet, hedge, &c. If at any time he heard of a better game cock than his own, he was ſure to get him by ſome means or other, though at a hundred miles diſtance.

A little way from home he had a cock-walk, and at the next houſe there chanced to be another. The owner of the cock at the latter houſe ſuppoſing that Metcalf's and his would meet, armed his own cock with a ſteel ſpur; which greatly diſpleaſing Metcalf, he formed a plan of revenge; and getting one of his comrades to aſſiſt, they procured a quantity of cabbage-leaves, and faſtening them

them together with ſkewers, they fixed them againſt the outſide of the windows, that the family might not perceive the return of day-light; and that they ſhould alſo be priſoners, theſe aſſociates in roguery walled up the door with ſtones, and mud-mortar, which they were aſſiſted in making by the convenience of a pump which ſtood near. They then brought water, in tubs, and continued pouring it in great quantities over the new wall, (which did not reach quite up to the top of the door-frame) until the houſe was flooded to a great depth. This done, they made the beſt of their way home.

In the morning, the people of the houſe finding their ſituation, and being at no loſs to ſuppoſe who had been the projector, and in all probability the leading performer, of the buſineſs, were no ſooner ſet at liberty, than they went to a Juſtice, and got a warrant for Metcalf; but not being able to prove the fact, he was, of courſe, diſmiſſed.

His fame now began to ſpread; and when any

any arch trick was done, inquiry was ſure to be made where Metcalf had been at the time.

At Bilton, two miles from Knareſborough, there was a rookery, and the boys had made many attempts to take the young ones; but the owner wiſhing to preſerve them, they were prevented. Metcalf determining to make a trial, ſent one of his comrades in the day-time as a ſpy to reconnoitre the poſition of the neſts; and having been informed by him as to this, they ſet out in the dead of night, and brought away ſeven dozen and a half, excepting the *heads*, which they left under the trees. The owner of the rooks finding the heads, ſent the bellman round, offering a reward of two guineas for diſcovering the offenders: the ſecret, however, was kept until long afterwards.

A man at Knareſborough having married a woman who had lived at a farm-houſe about a mile diſtant, brought his wife to his own home; and ſome articles being left in the deſerted houſe, he ſent a ſon he had by a former marriage to bring them away.—

Metcalf

Metcalf being about the ſame age as this boy, choſe to accompany him. When they got to the place, the boy miſſed the key, which he had loſt from his pocket by the way; and being afraid to return without his errand, he conſulted Metcalf about what was to be done. Metcalf was for entering the houſe at all events; and not being able to procure a ladder, got a pole, which reached to the thatch, and having borrowed a rope and a ſtick, he climbed up the pole, and then aſcending by the roof to the chimney, he placed the ſtick acroſs, and faſtening the rope to it, attempted to deſcend, but finding the flew too narrow, he threw off his cloaths, and laying them on the ridge of the houſe, made a ſecond attempt, and ſucceeded: he then opened the door for his companion. While they were in the houſe, there was a heavy thunder-ſhower, to which Metcalf's cloathes were expoſed, being left upon the houſe-top: he attempted to get up again, to fetch them; but the pole by which he had aſcended was now ſo wet, that he could not

climb by it; he was therefore obliged to wait until it dried, when aſcending again, he recovered his cloathes. This was conſidered by all who heard of it as a very extraordinary performance by one in his ſituation, as well as a great act of friendſhip to his companion.

In the year 1732 Metcalf was invited to Harrogate, to ſucceed, as fidler, a poor old man who had played there for 70 years, and who, being borne down by the weight of 100 years, began to play too ſlow for country dancing. Metcalf was well received by the nobility and gentry, who employed no other fidler, except a boy whom he hired as an aſſiſtant, when they began to build a long-room at the Queen's Head.

Being once, with his aſſiſtant, at Ripon aſſembly, they reſolved to call the next day at Newby Hall, the ſeat of 'Squire Blacket; having got acquainted with that worthy family by their frequent viſits to Harrogate. There they ſtayed, regaling themſelves, till near night, when they ſet out for home.

In

In the way, they had to croſs the river Ure by a ford, or go round by Boroughbridge or Ripon, which latter Metcalf was not inclined to do. They were told that the ford would be found impaſſable, much rain having fallen. Metcalf, however, was determined to try; but on coming to the water-ſide, he found his companion was much in liquor, and began to doubt of *his* getting over: as for himſelf, he had no fear, being a good ſwimmer.—So it was agreed that Metcalf ſhould ſtrip, and (leaving his cloathes to the care of his friend) lead his horſe over, and thereby prove whether or not it was ſafe for his comrade to follow. By this means they got over, but not before it was dark. He then began to dreſs himſelf, but his waiſtcoat (in which were the three joints of his hautboy) was miſſing, as alſo his ſilver ſhoe-buckles, and ſeventeen ſhillings which fell from his pocket. This was an unpleaſant accident, but there being no preſent remedy, they made the beſt of their way to Copgrove, where they reſted. Metcalf liſtened dili-

gently to the clock, and after ſome hours, ſuppoſing the waters to have abated, (which was the caſe,) he returned, and found his ſeventeen ſhillings on the bank, and a buckle on each ſide of the water. The waiſtcoat and hautboy he could never recover, although he carefully drew the deeps with a gardener's iron rake, which he had procured for that purpoſe at Newby Hall.

Metcalf now bought a horſe, and often ran him for ſmall plates. He ſtill continued to be a cocker—often hunted—and ſometimes went a courſing; in the evenings he attended to play at the aſſemblies: finding, from theſe various purſuits, pretty ſufficient employment. Being greatly encouraged by the gentlemen, he began to think himſelf of that claſs, excepting that his *rents* failed to come in half-yearly from his tenants.

About this time there was a long-room built at the Green-Dragon at Harrogate. More muſic being then wanted, he engaged one Midgeley (one of the Leeds waits) and his

his ſon, as aſſiſtants. Midgeley, ſen. being a good performer, was taken into partnerſhip gratis; but the ſon, and Metcalf's former aſſiſtant, paid five pounds each premium. This was done with the approbation of all the innkeepers, who wiſhed to keep Metcalf at the head of the band.

In the year 1735, Francis Barlow, Eſq; of Middlethorp, near York, who kept a pack of beagles, was at Harrogate, and liking Metcalf, gave him an invitation to ſpend the winter at Middlethorp, deſiring him to bring his horſe: the invitation was gladly accepted, and he went out with Mr. Barlow's hounds twice a week, highly gratified in the enjoyment of his favourite ſport. While at Middlethorp, he was invited by Mr. Hebdin, an eminent muſician, of York, to come to his houſe, and play, offering him, gratis, any ſervice or inſtruction in his power: this kind offer Metcalf readily accepted, and went to practice muſic on thoſe days when there was no hunting.

He

He had now completed a visit of six months to the worthy 'Squire of Middlethorpe;—and the hunting season being almost over, he proposed to his patron to take a farewell hunt in the forenoon, intending to proceed to Knaresborough in the evening.—He accordingly set out with the hounds in the morning; returned with the 'Squire at noon; got himself and his horse well fed and *watered*, and then proceeded to York, to take leave of Mr. Hebdin, previous to his going home. He had learned to walk and ride very readily through most of the streets of York; and as he was riding past the George Inn, in Coneystreet, Standish, the landlord, stopped him, calling out "What haste?" Metcalf told him he was for Knaresborough that night—The landlord replied, that there was a gentleman in the house who wanted a guide to Harrogate; adding, "I know you can do that as well as any one."—"So I can," said he, "but you must not let him know that I am blind, for perhaps he will be afraid to trust me."

me."—"*I* ſhall manage that," replied Standiſh; ſo going in, he informed the gentleman that he had procured him a ſafe guide. Pleaſed at this, the gentleman requeſted that Metcalf would come in and take a bottle: this (for an obvious reaſon) the landlord objected to on the part of Metcalf, but recommended ſome wine at the door; during the drinking of which, the ſtranger got ready, and they ſet off, Metcalf taking the lead. As they were turning Ouſegate corner, a voice halloed out "*'Squire Barlow's Blind Huntſman!*" but the gentleman not knowing the meaning of this, they rode briſkly up Micklegate, through the Bar, turned the corner to Holgate, and through Poppleton Field on to Heſſay Moor, and ſo proceeded forward, going over Skip-Bridge. (At this time the turnpike was not made between York and Harrogate.)

On the North-Weſt end of Kirk-Hammerton Moor, the road to Knareſborough joined the main road which leads to Boroughbridge by a ſudden turn to the left; but Metcalf cleared

cleared that without any difficulty. When they came to Allerton-Mauleverer, the ſtranger aſked whoſe large houſe that was on the right; and was immediately informed by Metcalf. A little farther on, the road is croſſed by the one from Wetherby to Boroughbridge, and proceeds along by the high brick wall of Allerton Park. There was a road leading out of the Park, oppoſite to the gate upon the Knareſborough road, which Metcalf was afraid of miſſing; but the wind being from the Eaſt, and he perceiving a blaſt coming through the Park-gate, he readily turned his horſe to the oppoſite gate which leads to Knareſborough. Reaching out his hand to open it, he felt the heel, as it is called; and, backing his horſe, exclaimed "Confound thee! thou always goes to the gate heel, inſtead of the head." The gentleman obſerved to him that his horſe ſeemed aukward, and that his own mare was good at coming up to a gate; whereupon Metcalf permitted him to perform this office. Darkneſs (which had now

come

come on) being no obſtruction to him, he briſkly led the way, reſolved that his companion ſhould not again ſee his face till they got to Harrogate. As they were going through Knareſborough, the gentleman propoſed a glaſs of wine, which Metcalf refuſed, alledging that the horſes were hot, and that being near their journey's end, it was not worth while to ſtop:—On then they went; and preſently ſome one cried out "*That's Blind Jack!*"—This aſſertion, however, was contradicted by another perſon who could not clearly identify him; and by this means the ſtranger was kept in the *dark* as effectually as his guide. They then proceeded over the High Bridge, and up the Foreſt Lane, and then entering the Foreſt, they had to paſs along a narrow cauſeway which reached about one-third of the way to Harrogate. When they had gone a little way upon the Foreſt, the gentleman ſaw a light, and aſked what place it was. There were ſome rocks upon the Foreſt called Hookſton Craggs, and near to theſe the ground was low and

ſwampy

ſwampy in ſome places, cloſe by which lays the Leeds road;—about this part were frequently ſeen at night, vapours, commonly called Will-o'-the-wiſp. Metcalf took it for granted that his companion had ſeen one of theſe, but for good reaſons declined aſking him whereabout the light was; and to divert his attention from this object, aſked him, "Do you not ſee two lights; one to the right, the other to the left?" "No," replied the gentleman; "I ſeen but one light, that there on the right."—"Well then, Sir," ſaid Metcalf, "that is Harrogate." There were then many tracks, but Metcalf made choice of that neareſt the fence: by the ſide of this path, which is very near Harrogate, ſome larches were planted; and ſtepping-ſtones laid for the convenience of foot-paſſengers: Metcalf got upon this ſtony path, and the gentleman's horſe following, got one of his hind feet jammed between two of the ſtones: when his horſe was freed, he aſked "Is there no other road?" "Yes," replied Metcalf, "there is another, but

it

it is a mile about:" knowing at the ſame time that there was a dirty cart-way juſt at hand, but to which upon ſome account he preferred this rugged path.

Arrived at their journey's end, they ſtopped at the houſe now called the Granby, but found that the oſtler was gone to bed.—Metcalf being very well acquainted with the place, led both the horſes into the ſtable, and the oſtler ſoon after appearing, he delivered them to his care, and went into the houſe to inquire after his fellow-traveller, whom he found comfortably ſeated over a tankard of negus, in which he pledged his guide; but when Metcalf attempted to take the tankard, he reached out his hand wide of the mark: however, he ſoon found it, and drank; and going out again, left to the landlord the opportunity of explaining to his companion what he was not yet ſenſible of.—"I think, landlord," ſaid the gentleman, "my guide muſt have drank a great deal of ſpirits ſince we came here."—"Why, my good Sir, do you think

ſo?"—"Well, I judge ſo from the appearance of his *eyes*."—"*Eyes!* bleſs you, Sir," rejoined the landlord, "do not you know that he is BLIND?"—"What do you mean by that?"—"I mean, Sir, that *he cannot ſee*."—"BLIND! Gracious God!!"—"Yes, Sir; as blind as a ſtone, by Heaven!"—"Well, landlord," ſaid the gentleman, "this is too much: call him in." Metcalf enters. "My friend, are you really blind?"—"Yes, Sir; I loſt my ſight when ſix years old."—"Had I known that, I would not have ventured with you for an hundred pounds."—"And I, Sir," ſaid Metcalf, "would not "have loſt my way for a thouſand." This converſation ended, they ſat down, and drank plentifully. Metcalf had with him a caſe containing a new fiddle which he had juſt received from London, and the gentleman obſerving it, deſired him to play: the guide gave him as much ſatisfaction in this way, as he had before done in the character of a conductor; and the ſervices of the evening were rewarded by a preſent of two guineas,

guineas, beſides a plentiful entertainment the next day, at the coſt of this gentleman, who looked upon the adventure with Metcalf as the moſt extraordinary incident he had ever met with.

1736. The Harrogate ſeaſon now commencing, Metcalf, of courſe, reſumed his occupation; and, being of a jocular and comic turn, was ſo well received at all the inns, that he obtained free quarters for himſelf and horſe.

The Green Dragon at that place was then kept by a Mr. Body, who had two nephews with him; and when the hunting ſeaſon drew near its cloſe, theſe with ſome other young men expreſſed a great deſire for a day's ſport; and knowing that Mr. Woodburn, the maſter of the Knareſborough pack of hounds, had often lent them to Metcalf for the ſame purpoſe, they doubted not of the ſucceſs of *his* application: being, however, unprovided with hunters, they were obliged to defer the day for near a fortnight before they could be accommodated.

On the evening before the appointed day, Metcalf went, flushed with hope, to Mr. Woodburn, requesting him to lend the pack for the next day. This was a favour out of his power to grant, having engaged to meet 'Squire Trapps, with the hounds, next morning, upon Scotton Moor, for the purpose of entering some young fox-hounds.—Chagrined at this, Metcalf debated with himself whether the disappointment should fall to Mr. Woodburn's friends, or his own: determining that it should not be the lot of the latter, he arose the next morning before day-break, and crossed the High Bridge, near which he had the advantage of the joint echos of the Old Castle and Belmont Wood. He had brought with him an extraordinary good hound of his own, and taking him by the ears, made him give mouth very loudly, himself giving some halloos at the same time. This device had so good an effect, that in a few minutes he had nine couple about him, as the hounds were kept by various people about the shambles, &c. and were suffered to lay

lay unkennelled. Mounting his horſe, away he rode with the dogs to Harrogate, where he met his friends, ready mounted, and in high ſpirits. Some of them propoſed going to Bilton Wood; but this was oppoſed by Metcalf, who preferred the Moor: in fact, he was apprehenſive of being followed by Mr. Woodburn, and wiſhed to be further from Knareſborough upon that account.

Purſuant to his advice, they drew the Moor, at the diſtance of five miles, where they ſtarted a hare, killed her after a fine chace, and immediately put up another:—juſt at this moment came up Mr. Woodburn, foaming with anger, ſwearing moſt terribly, and threatening to ſend Metcalf to the devil, or at leaſt to the houſe of correction; and, his paſſion riſing to the utmoſt, rode up with an intention to horſewhip him, which Metcalf prevented, by galloping out of his reach.—Mr. Woodburn then endeavoured to call off the hounds; but Metcalf, knowing the fleetneſs of his own horſe, ventured within ſpeaking, though not within *whipping*, diſtance of

him, and begged that he would permit the dogs to finiſh the chace, alledging that it would ſpoil them to take them off; and that he was ſure they would (as they actually did) kill in a very ſhort time. Metcalf ſoon found that Mr. Woodburn's anger had begun to abate; and going nearer to him, pleaded in excuſe a miſunderſtanding of his plan, which he ſaid he thought had been fixed for the day after. The apology ſucceeded with this good-natured gentleman, who, giving the hare to Metcalf, deſired he would accompany him to Scotton Moor, whither, though late, he would go, rather than wholly diſappoint Mr. Trapps. The reader, by this time, knows enough of Metcalf to believe he was not averſe to this propoſal; ſo leaving the hares with his comrades, and engaging to be with them in the evening, he joined his old aſſociate. The day being advanced, Metcalf objected to the circuitous way of Harrogate Bridge, propoſing to croſs the river Nidd at Holm Bottom; and Mr. Woodburn not being acquainted with the ford,

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he again undertook the office of guide, and leading the way, they ſoon arrived at Scotton Moor, where Mr. Trapps and his company had waited for them two hours. Mr. Woodburn explained the cauſe of the delay, and, being now able to participate in the joke, the affair ended very agreeably.

Metcalf ſtayed with this company until three in the afternoon, and then ſet off for Harrogate, croſſing the river. He had not taſted food that day; but when he got to his friends, he found them preparing the brace of hares, with many other good things, for ſupper; and after ſpending many jovial hours, he played country-dances till daylight.

When the Harrogate ſeaſon was over, it was Metcalf's conſtant cuſtom to viſit at the inns, always ſpending the evening at one or other of them. At the Royal Oak (now the Granby) in particular, ſcenes of mirth were often going forward; and at theſe he greatly attracted the notice of one of the landlord's daughters.

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In the ſummer he uſed often to run his horſe for the petty plates or prizes given at the feaſts in the neighbourhood; and on all theſe occaſions, when in her power, ſhe was ſure to attend, with her female friends. By frequent intercourſe, the lady and Metcalf became very intimate; and this intimacy produced mutual regard and confidence. Her mother being a high-ſpirited woman, had brought up her daughters, as ſhe hoped at leaſt, with notions ill ſuited to the condition of Metcalf; ſo that in order to diſguiſe the ſtate of their hearts from her parents, the lovers agreed on a ſet of names and phraſes, intelligible to each other, though not ſo to them. He uſed to call himſelf Mary, or Tibby, (at once changing the ſex, and ſpeaking as if of a third perſon); and ſhe, Harry, or Dickey, or ſome ſuch name. Whenever he ſought to intimate to her his intention of viſiting her, he would ſay, "You muſt tell Richard that Mary will be here on ſuch a day." Her mother would perhaps

aſk,

aſk, "Who is that?" To which ſhe would reply, that it was a young woman who was to meet her brother there.—But if the day appointed by Metcalf was not convenient, ſhe would ſay, that "Richard had called, and had left word that Mary ſhould call again at ſuch a time;" meaning the time ſhe wiſhed Metcalf to come.—And as ſhe commonly faſtened the doors, when ſhe expected him ſhe always left a door or a window open.

One night, in particular, Metcalf having, in conſequence of an appointment, arrived there about midnight, and got in by a window that had been deſignedly left open; in his way to the *young* woman's room, he met the *old* one in the middle of the ſtair-caſe! Both parties were much ſurpriſed; and the miſtreſs aſking angrily "Who's there?" "What do you want?" he knowing that ſhe always went to bed early, replied "I came in late laſt night, ſat down in a chair by the fire-ſide, and fell faſt aſleep." She then called loudly

loudly to her daughter, "Why did you not ſhew Jack to bed?" "I was not to ſit up all night for him;" replied the laſs. He then purſued his way up ſtairs, and the girl conducted him to a bed-room.

In ſummer he would often play at bowls, making the following conditions with his antagoniſt, viz. to receive the odds of a bowl extra for the deficiency of an eye.—By theſe terms he had three for the other's one. He took care to place a friend and confidant at the jack, and another about mid-way; and thoſe, keeping up a conſtant diſcourſe with him, enabled him, by their voices, to judge of the diſtance. The degree of bias he could always aſcertain by feeling; and, odd as it may ſeem, was very frequently the winner.

Cards, too, began to engage his attention; all of which he could ſoon diſtinguiſh, unaſſiſted; and many were the perſons of rank who, from curioſity, played with him, he generally winning the majority of the games.

But

But the atchievements already enumerated were far from bounding either his ambition or capacity: He now aſpired to the acquaintance of jockies of a higher claſs than he had hitherto known, and to this end frequented the races at York and many other places; when he always found the better kind of perſons inclined to lend him their ſkill in making his bets, &c. impreſſed, as they no doubt were, with ſympathy for his ſituation, and ſurprize at his odd propenſity.

He commonly rode to the race-ground amongſt the crowd; and kept in memory both the winning and loſing horſes.

Being much in the habit of viſiting York in the winter time, a whim would often take him to call for his horſe at bed-time, and ſet out for Knareſborough, regardleſs of the badneſs of the roads and weather, and of all remonſtrance from his friends; yet the hand of Providence always conducted him in ſafety. —It was quite common for him to go from Skipton, over the Foreſt Moor, to Knareſborough, alone; but if he had company,

and

and it was night, he was, of courſe, the foremoſt.

About the year 1738, Metcalf having increaſed his ſtud, and being aware of the docility of that noble animal, the horſe, ſo tutored his own, that whenever he called them by their reſpective names, they would immediately anſwer him by neighing. This was chiefly accompliſhed by ſome diſcipline at the time of feeding. He could, however, without the help of thoſe reſponſes, ſelect his own horſes out of any number.

Having matched one of his horſes, to run three miles, for a wager of ſome note, and the parties agreeing to ride each his own, they ſet up poſts at certain diſtances, on the Foreſt, including a circle of one mile; having, of courſe, three rounds to go. Great odds were laid againſt Metcalf, upon the ſuppoſition of his inability to keep the courſe. But what did his ingenuity ſuggeſt in this dilemma: or, rather, what did it anticipate? He procured four dinner-bells from the different inns, with what others he could

could borrow; and placing a man, with a bell, at each poſt, he was enabled, by the ringing, to turn; and fully availing himſelf of the ſuperior fleetneſs of his horſe, came in winner, amidſt the plaudits and exultations of the multitude, except only thoſe who had betted againſt him.

A gentleman of the name of Skelton then came up, and propoſed to Metcalf a ſmall wager, that he could not gallop a horſe of his fifty yards, and ſtop him within two hundred. This horſe was notorious as a run-away, and had baffled the efforts of the beſt and ſtrongeſt riders to hold him. Metcalf agreed to the wager, upon condition that he might chooſe his ground; but Skelton objected to there being either hedge or wall in the diſtance. Metcalf, every ready at any thing that was likely to produce a joke, agreed; the ſtakes were depoſited; and knowing that there was a large bog near the Old Spa at Harrogate, he mounted at about the diſtance of an hundred and fifty yards from it. Having obſerved the wind,

and placed a perſon who was to ſing a ſong, for the guidance of ſound, he ſet off, at full gallop, for the bog, and ſoon fixed the horſe ſaddle-ſkirt deep in the mire. He then floundered through the dirt as well as he was able, till he gained a firm footing; when he demanded his wager, which was allotted him by the general ſuffrage. It was with the greateſt difficulty, however, that the horſe could be extricated.——That Metcalf was ſo well acquainted with this ſpot, was owing to his having, about three weeks before, relieved a ſtranger who had got faſt in it in the night, and whoſe cries had attracted him.

It was now no unuſual thing with him to buy horſes, with a view to ſell them again. Happening to meet with a man who had left the place of huntſman to a pack of ſubſcription hounds kept by Sir John Kaye, 'Squire Hawkeſworth, and others, and who had a horſe to ſell, Metcalf inquired his price, at the ſame time requeſting permiſſion to ride him a little way. Having trotted

trotted the horſe a mile or two, he returned, telling the owner that the *eyes* of his nag would ſoon fail. The man, however, ſtood firm to his demand of twenty-five guineas for the horſe, alledging that he was beautifully moulded, only ſix years old, and his action good. Metcalf then took the man into the ſtable, and deſired him to lay his hand upon the eyes of the horſe, to feel their uncommon heat; aſking him, at the ſame time, how he could, in conſcience, demand ſo great a price for a horſe that was going blind. This treaty ended with Metcalf's purchaſing the horſe, bridle, and ſaddle, for fourteen pounds.

A few days after, as he was riding on his new purchaſe, he ran againſt a ſign-poſt, upon the Common, near the Toy-Shop, and nearly threw it down. Not diſcouraged by this, he ſet off for Ripon, to play at an aſſembly; and paſſing by a place at Harrogate called the World's-End, he overtook a man going the Ripon road.—With him Metcalf laid a wager of ſix-pennyworth of

liquor, that he would get firſt to an alehouſe at ſome ſmall diſtance. The ground being rough, Metcalf's horſe ſoon fell, and lay for a while on the thigh of his maſter, when, making an effort to riſe, he cut Metcalf's face with one of his fore ſhoes. The Rev. Mr. Richardſon coming up at this moment, and expreſſing his concern for the accident, Metcalf told him that nothing had hurt him but the cowardice of his horſe, who had *ſtruck him whilſt he was down.* His inſtrument, however, ſuffered ſo materially, that he was obliged to borrow one to perform on for the night, at Ripon, to which place he got without further accident. The aſſembly over, he ſet off to return to Harrogate, and arrived there about three in the morning.

He now thought it was time to diſpoſe of his fine horſe, whoſe eyes began to diſcharge much. After applying the uſual remedies of allum blown into the eyes, roweling in different parts, &c. he found him in marketable condition; and knowing that there would ſoon be a great ſhew of horſes without

out Micklegate-Bar, at York, he reſolved to take the chance of that mart; and ſetting out the night before, put up at the Swan, in Micklegate. The next morning, when the ſhew began, Metcalf's nag attracted the notice of one Carter, a very extenſive dealer, who aſking the price, was told twenty-two guineas. Carter then inquired if he was ſound, and received for anſwer, "I have never known him *lame;* but I ſhall trot him on this pavement, and if there be any ailment of that kind, it will ſoon appear, with my weight." The dealer bade him ſixteen guineas, and a little after, ſeventeen; which Metcalf, for well-known reaſons, was glad to receive.

Having ſold his horſe, he ſet off on foot for Harrogate; but before he had got to Holgate (about a mile on his way) he was overtaken by a Knareſborough man, on horſeback, who propoſed, for two ſhillings-worth of punch, to let him ride in turn, dividing the diſtances equally. Metcalf thought the man was unreaſonable in his

demand, but agreed to it at length; and giving his companion one tankard, he, by conſent, got the firſt ride, with inſtructions to the following effect, viz. That he ſhould ride on till he got a little beyond Poppleton-Field, where he would *ſee* a gate on his right hand, to which he ſhould faſten the horſe, and leaving him for the owner, proceed. Metcalf not *ſeeing* the gate, as deſcribed, rode on to Knareſborough, which was ſeventeen miles from the place where he had left his fellow-traveller. He then left the horſe at the owner's houſe, ſaying that the maſter having got into a return-chaiſe, had deſired him to ride the horſe home.——The owner was greatly enraged at being left to walk ſo long a way; but, on Metcalf's pleading that he never *ſaw* the gate, he found it his intereſt to join in the laugh.

Being now in the prime of life, and poſſeſſing a peculiar archneſs of diſpoſition, with an unceaſing flow of ſpirits, and a contempt of danger, ſeldom if ever equalled by one in his circumſtances, it will not be wondered at that

that levities, ſuch as are before recited, ſhould have employed a conſiderable portion of his time. The ſequel, however, will, in due courſe, ſhew, that he was capable of embarking in, and bringing to perfection, ſeveral ſchemes, of public as well as private utility; and this promiſe to the reader, it is hoped, will inſure his patience, while he is made the companion of the author in a few more of his frolicſome adventures.

In the year 1738 Metcalf attained the age of twenty-one years, and the height of ſix feet one inch and an half, and was remarkably robuſt withal.

At that time there lived at Knareſborough one John Bake, a man of a ferocious temper and athletic figure. He was conſidered in the neighbourhood as a champion, or rather bully; and thus qualified, was often employed *ſpecially*, to ſerve writs or warrants, in caſes where deſperate reſiſtance was expected. Metcalf going one evening, with a friend, to a public houſe, they there met this Bake; and a ſhort time after, Metcalf's friend

and Bake ſat down to cards. The latter took ſome money off the table, to which he was not entitled; and the former remonſtrating on the injuſtice of Bake, received from him a violent blow. Metcalf interpoſing with words only at firſt, was treated in the ſame manner; when inſtantly entering into combat with this ruffian, he beſtowed upon him ſuch diſcipline as ſoon extorted a cry for mercy.

To the fame which Metcalf had acquired by various means, was now added that of a boxer, though he was far from being ambitious of celebrity in that way. Some little time after, Metcalf was called up at midnight by this very Bake, who, knowing by experience the proweſs and powers of his late antagoniſt, had preſumed to make a bet of five guineas, that Metcalf would beat a fellow whoſe company he had juſt left.—But Metcalf gave him to underſtand, that, although he had ſtore of thumps for thoſe who ſhould treat him with inſolence, he was no prize-fighter; and having no quarrel with the man

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in queſtion, he (Bake) might fight or forfeit as he liked beſt.

Being deſirous of getting a little fiſh, he once, unaſſiſted, drew a net of eighty yards length, in the deepeſt part of the river Wharfe, for three hours together. At one time he held the lines in his mouth, being obliged to ſwim.

The following wager he laid, and won: He engaged with a man at the Queen's Head at Harrogate, to go to Knareſborough Croſs, and return, in leſs time than the other would gather one hundred and twenty ſtones, laid at regular diſtances of a yard each, and, taking one ſtone at a time, put them all into a baſket placed at one end of the line.

Meeting with ſome company, amongſt whom there was one of a boaſtful turn, Metcalf propoſed to go againſt him from Harrogate to Knareſborough Croſs, provided he would take the way which Metcalf ſhould chooſe. To this the other agreed, believing that he could eaſily keep pace with Metcalf till he ſhould arrive within ſight of the Croſs,

and

and that he could then puſh forward, and beat him. But when they got within half a mile of the town, Metcalf quitted the road which leads over the High Bridge, and, knowing that his antagoniſt could not ſwim, made for a deep part of the river above Bridge, and diveſting himſelf of his upper drapery, ſwam acroſs; at the ſame time calling out jeeringly to his adverſary, "that he hoped for the pleaſure of his company up to the Croſs." The other, not liking to commit himſelf to the water, gave up the wager.

About this time, Dr. Chambers, of Ripon, had a well-made horſe, which he uſed to hunt; but finding that latterly he became a great ſtumbler, he exchanged him with a dealer, who took him to Harrogate, and meeting with Metcalf, told him he had an excellent hunter to ſell at a low price.—Metcalf deſired to try how the horſe leaped, and the owner agreeing, he mounted him, and found that he could go over any wall or fence, the height of himſelf when ſaddled. A bargain was ſoon ſtruck; and this happening

pening at the Queen's Head, ſeveral gentlemen who were witneſſes of the horſe's performance invited Metcalf to accompany them, two days after, to Belmont Wood, where a pack of hounds were to throw off.

Theſe hounds were the joint property of Francis Trapps, Eſq; and his brother, of Nidd, near Ripley. A pack ſuperior to this was not to be found in the kingdom; nor were the owners themſelves ever excelled in their attention to their dogs and hunters.

The wiſhed-for day arriving, Metcalf attended the gentlemen, and the hounds were not long in finding. The fox took away to Plumpton Rocks, but finding all ſecure there he made for Stockeld Wood, and found matters in the ſame ſtate as at Plumpton.—He had then run about ſix miles. He came back, and croſſed the river Nidd near the Old Abbey, and went on the Eaſt ſide of Knareſborough, to a place called Coney-Garths (where there were earths) near Scriven. Metcalf's horſe carried him nobly; pulling hard, and requiring proportionate

tionate reſiſtance. The wind being high, Metcalf loſt his hat, but would not ſtop to recover it; and coming to Thiſtle-Hill, near Knareſborough, he reſolved to croſs the river at the Abbey-Mill, having often before gone, *on foot*, over the dam-ſtones. When he got to the dam, he attended to the noiſe of the fall, as a guide, and ranging his horſe in a line with the ſtones, daſhed forward for ſome part of the way; but the ſtones being ſlippery with a kind of moſs, his horſe ſtumbled, but recovered this and a ſecond blunder: the third time, however, floundering completely, away went horſe and rider into the dam. Metcalf had preſence of mind to diſengage his feet from the ſtirrups, during the deſcent; but both the horſe and himſelf were immerſed over head in water. He then quitted his ſeat, and made for the oppoſite ſide, the horſe following him. Having ſecured his nag, he laid himſelf down on his back, and held up his heels to let the water run out of his boots; which done, he quickly re-mounted, and went up a narrow lane

which

which leads to the road between Knaresborough and Wetherby; then through some lanes on the North-East side of Knaresborough; and crossing the Boroughbridge road, he got to the Coney-Garths, where he found that the whipper-in only had arrived before him.

Here the fox had earthed, as was expected; and the other horsemen (who had gone over the Low Bridge, and through the town) after some time came up.—They were much surprised at finding Metcalf there, and attributed the soaked condition of himself and horse to profuse sweating; nor were they undeceived till (giving up the fox) they got to Scriven, where, upon an explanation of the affair, they laughed heartily.

In the circle of Metcalf's acquaintance at Knaresborough were two young men, whose sister lived with them in the capacity of housekeeper; and she being of a jocular turn, would often, on Metcalf's calling at the house, propose such whimsical schemes to him, as gave him reason to believe that to

laugh and be merry was the chief buſineſs of her life. However, ſhe one evening appriſed him of her intention to pay him a viſit in the night, and deſired him to leave his door unlocked. A knowledge of the woman's mirthful propenſity made him at firſt conſider this as a joke; but, on the other hand, he though it *poſſible* that a *real* aſſignation was intended; and being too gallant to diſappoint a *lady*, he told her he would obey her orders. Too ſure for the future peace of Metcalf, the lady was punctual to her appointment; coming at the dead time of night to his mother's houſe, unawed at paſſing by the *church*, whoſe ſanction was wanting. It would be impertinent to detain the reader on the ſubject of the meeting: ſuffice it to ſay, that Metcalf too had unfortunately left his ſcruples at another houſe. In a few months after, this tender creature accoſted him in the uſual way—"I am ruined!—undone!—loſt for ever, if you do not make an honeſt woman of me!—" &c. &c.

What-

Whatever compunction Metcalf might have felt in a case of confiding innocence, pleading for the only compensation in his power, he did not think his conscience very deeply interested in the present: besides, his heart was strongly attached to his first truly respectable and worthy mistress.—His business, therefore, was to pacify a troublesome client, which he did in the best manner he was able. The adventure with this dulcinea had happened previous to the above-mentioned hunt; but when Metcalf accompanied the gentlemen from the Coney-Garths to the village of Scriven, he there heard, on the authority of the landlord of the inn, that a woman had gone that day to filiate a child to him. He endeavoured to be merry on the occasion, alledging, that it could not be so, as he had not *seen* the woman for several years. This produced a laugh among the company; but with Metcalf it soon took a more serious turn. On his return to Harrogate he employed his fellow-fidler to procure a meeting between him and his favourite,

Dorothy Benſon, which was effected with ſome difficulty; and he took this occaſion to inform her of his diſgrace, judging it better to be before-hand with her, in a matter which could not be long concealed.—"Ah! John," replied ſhe, "thou haſt got into a ſad ſcrape: but I intreat thee, do not think of marrying her." Having quieted the fears of his favourite on that ſcore, he deſired his aſſiſtant to go with him to Knareſborough, to *ſound the coaſt;* but before they had got half way, his companion exclaimed, "Here is the Town-Officer coming!" Metcalf propoſed walking ſmartly on, without noticing him; but when they got near, the Officer, who was a Quaker, called out, "Stop, I want to ſpeak with thee." He then explained his errand, and preſſed Metcalf much to marry the woman; to which he replied, that he had no thoughts of marriage, and deſired to know whether for thirty or forty pounds in money the matter might be made up. "Yea, friend," ſaid Jonathan, "perhaps I can ſettle the affair for

for thee on thoſe terms." On this, Metcalf obſerved to him, that he muſt go to Harrogate, his money being there. The Quaker agreeing, they went together to a public-houſe, where Metcalf called for a tankard of punch, drank part of it, and ſeeming very chearful, ſaid, "I muſt go and collect my money: as it is in various hands, perhaps it will be an hour or more before I can return; ſo drink your punch, and call for more." This pretext ſucceeding, he left Jonathan to regale himſelf at his own ſuit; and chooſing the moſt private way to a thick wood, he there ſecreted himſelf all day. After ſome hours waiting, the man of the broad brim loſt all patience, and ſet out in queſt of his profane ward; when meeting a gentleman, he thus accoſted him: "Friend! have thee, perchance, ſeen a blind fidler?" The gentleman replied, "I thought that a perſon of thy cloth had not wanted a fidler." "I tell thee I want one at this time," quoth the Quaker; who, after ſome other fruitleſs inquiries, went home.

At night, Metcalf ventured to break cover; and judging it unſafe to remain in the neighbourhood of the *hounds*, he gave his aſſiſtant directions to put his little affairs in order—then mounting his horſe, he took the road for Scarborough.

As he was walking one day on the ſands, with a friend, he reſolved to take a ſwim in the ſea, his companion agreeing to give him an halloo when he ſhould think he had gone far enough outward; but the other, not making a ſufficient allowance for the noiſe of the ſea, ſuffered him to go out of hearing before he ſhouted, and Metcalf continued ſwimming until he got out of the ſight of his friend, who now ſuſpected he ſhould ſee him no more. At length he began to reflect, that, ſhould he proceed on to Holland, he had nothing in his *pocket* to make him welcome;—ſo turning, and removing his hair from his ears, he thought he heard the breakers beating againſt the pier which defends the Spa: finding, by the noiſe, that he

he was at a great diſtance, he increaſed his efforts, and happening to be right, he landed in ſafety, and relieved his friend from a very painful ſituation.

Having an aunt at Whitby, near the Allum-works, he went there, left his horſe, and got on board an allum ſhip bound for London.

In London he met with a North-country man who played on the ſmall pipes, and who frequented the houſes of many gentlemen in town. By his intelligence Metcalf found out ſeveral who were in the habit of viſiting Harrogate; and amongſt others, Colonel Liddell, who reſided in King-ſtreet, Covent-Garden, and who gave him a general invitation to his houſe. The Colonel was a Member of Parliament for Berwick-upon-Tweed, and lived at Ravenſworth-Caſtle, near Newcaſtle-upon-Tyne; and on his return from London into the North, which generally happened in the month of May, he ſtopped three weeks at Harrogate, for a number of years ſucceſſively.

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When the winter was over, Metcalf thought he muſt take a *look* out of London. Accordingly he ſet out through Kenſington, Hammerſmith, Colnbrook, Maidenhead, and Reading, in Berkſhire; and returned by Windſor, and Hampton-Court, to London, in the beginning of May. In his abſence, Colonel Liddell had ſent to his lodgings, to let him know that he was going to Harrogate, and that, if agreeable to him, he might go down either behind his coach or on the top. Metcalf, on his return, waited upon the Colonel, and thanked him, but declined his kind offer, obſerving, that he could, with great eaſe, walk as far in a day as he would chooſe to travel. The next day, at noon, the Colonel, and his ſuite, conſiſting of ſixteen ſervants on horſeback, ſet off, Metcalf ſtarting about an hour before them. They were to go by way of Bugden, and he made his way to Barnet. A little way from Barnet the Bugden and St. Albans roads part, and he had taken the latter: however, he made good the deſtined ſtage for ſleeping, which

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was Welling, and arrived a little before the Colonel, who was ſurprized at his performance. Metcalf ſet off again the next morning before his friends, and coming to Biggleſwade, found the road was croſſed with water, there being no bridge at that time. He made a circuitous caſt, but found no other way, except a foot-path which he was dubious of truſting. A perſon coming up, aſked, "What road are you for?"—He anſwered, "For Bugden." "You have had ſome liquor this morning, I ſuppoſe," ſaid the ſtranger.—"Yes," replied Metcalf; although he had taſted none that day. The ſtranger then bid him follow, and he would bring him into the highway. Soon after they came to ſome ſluices, with planks laid acroſs, and Metcalf followed by the ſound of his guide's feet; then to a gate, on the ſide of the turnpike, which being locked, he was told to climb over. Metcalf was ſtruck with the kind attention of his conductor, and taking twopence from his pocket, ſaid, "Here, good fellow, take that, and get thee

a pint of beer;" but the other declined it, ſaying he was welcome. Metcalf, however, preſſing the reward upon him, was aſked, "Can you ſee very well?" "Not remarkably well," he replied. "My friend," ſaid the ſtranger, "I do not mean to *tythe* you:—I am Rector of this pariſh; and ſo God bleſs you, and I wiſh you a good journey." Metcalf ſet forward with the parſon's benediction, and ſtopped every night with the Colonel: On coming to Wetherby, he arrived at the inn before him, as uſual, and told the landlord of his approach, who aſked him by what means he had become acquainted with that, and was informed by him how he had preceded the Colonel the whole week, this being Saturday, and they had left town on Monday noon. The Colonel arriving, ordered Metcalf into his room, and propoſed halting till Monday; but Metcalf replied, "With your leave, Sir, I ſhall go to Harrogate to-night, and meet you there on Monday." In truth, he was anxious to know the worſt reſpecting the woman who had been

been the cauſe of his journey; and was much pleaſed to find matters in a better train than he expected, ſhe being in a comfortable way, and not inclined to be farther troubleſome. Many friends viſited him on Sunday, and the next day the Colonel arrived. But of all his friends, the deareſt was at the Royal Oak: with her he had an affectionate meeting, after an abſence of ſeven months. During this interval a young man had been paying his addreſſes to her; and knowing that Metcalf was acquainted with the family, he ſolicited him to uſe what intereſt he had in his behalf: this, when made known to the lady by the man of her heart, afforded them both great entertainment.

Metcalf became now in great requeſt as a performer at Ripon aſſembly, which was reſorted to by many families of diſtinction, ſuch as thoſe of Sir Walter Blacket of Newby, Sir John Wray, Sir R. Graham, 'Squire Rhodes, 'Squire Aiſlaby of Studley, and many others. When he played alone,

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it was uſual with him, after the aſſembly, to ſet off for Harrogate or Knareſborough; but when he had an aſſiſtant, he remained all night at Ripon to keep him company, his partner being afraid to ride in the dark.

Finding himſelf worth fifteen pounds, (a larger ſum than he ever before had to ſpare) he made his favourite Miſs Benſon his treaſurer; but as he had not yet begun to ſpeculate in the purchaſe of *land*, and a main of cocks being made in the neighbourhood, he became a party, and drawing his caſh from the hands of his fair banker, he loſt two-thirds of his whole fortune.—The remaining five pounds he laid on a horſe which was to run at York a few days after; and though he had the good fortune to win the laſt wager, his general imprudence in this way produced a little ſhyneſs from his ſweetheart.

His competitor (not ſuſpecting the intimacy between Metcalf and the young lady) puſhed his ſuit briſkly; and after a ſhort time, banns were publiſhed in the churches of Knareſborough and Kirby-Overblow.—

Metcalf

Metcalf was much ſurpriſed, having long thought himſelf ſecure of her affection. He now began to believe that ſhe had laid more ſtreſs on his late follies than he had been aware of, and the remembrance of them gave him exquiſite pain, for he loved her tenderly, and was reſtrained from propoſing marriage to her only by the doubts he had of being able to ſupport her in the manner ſhe had been accuſtomed to. On the other hand, his pride made him diſdain to ſhew that he was hurt, or to take any meaſures to prevent the match. The publication of banns being complete, the wedding-day was appointed.—The ſuppoſed bridegroom had provided an entertainment at his houſe for upwards of two hundred people; and going with a few friends to Harrogate on the Sunday, propoſed the following day for the nuptials, which were to be ſolemnized at Knareſborough, intending to return to Harrogate to breakfaſt, where a bride-cake was ready, with a hamper of wine, which latter was to have been carried to Kirby, for the uſe of the gueſts he had invited.

On the Sunday, Metcalf riding pretty ſmartly paſt the Royal Oak, towards the Queen's Head, was loudly accoſted in theſe words—"One wants to ſpeak with you." He turned immediately to the ſtables of the Oak, and, to his joyful ſurpriſe, found there his favourite, who had ſent her mother's maid to call him. "Well, laſs," ſaid he, "thou's going to have a merry day to-morrow; am I to be the fidler?"—"Thou never ſhalt fiddle at my wedding," replied ſhe. "What's the matter? What have I done?" ſaid Metcalf.—"Matters may not end," ſaid ſhe, "as ſome folks wiſh they ſhould." "What!" ſaid he, "hadſt thou rather have me? Canſt thou bear ſtarving?"—"Yes," ſaid ſhe, "with *thee* I can!" "Give me thy hand, then, laſs,—ſkin for ſkin, it's all done!"

The girl who had called him being preſent, he told her, that as ſhe and his horſe were the only witneſſes to what had paſſed, he would kill the firſt who ſhould divulge it.—The immediate concern was to fix on ſome plan,

plan, as Miſs Benſon was apprehenſive of being miſſed by her friends.—Jack, ever prompt at an expedient, deſired that ſhe would that night place a lighted candle in one of the windows of the old houſe, as ſoon as the coaſt was clear, and herſelf ready to ſet off, which will doubtleſs appear to the reader a very extraordinary ſignal to a blind man; but he had conceived meaſures for carrying the projected elopement into effect by the aſſiſtance of a third perſon. This being approved of, ſhe went into the houſe, and in a ſhort time was followed by Metcalf, who was warmly received by the ſuppoſed bridegroom and company. The tankard went briſkly round with "Succeſs to the intended couple;" in which toaſt, it may be readily believed, Metcalf joined them moſt cordially.

Having ſtayed till it was near dark, he thought it time for putting buſineſs into a proper train. Going then to a public houſe known by the name of the World's End, he inquired for the oſtler, whom he knew to be

a ſteady fellow; and after obtaining from this man a promiſe either to ſerve him in an affair of moment in which he was engaged, or keep the ſecret, he related the particulars of his aſſignation, and the intended elopement; to forward which, he deſired him to let them have his maſter's mare, which he knew would carry double.—This agreed on, he requeſted the further ſervice of meeting him at the Raffle Shop (now the Library) at ten o'clock: a whiſtle was to be given by the firſt who got there, as a ſignal. They met pretty punctually; and Metcalf aſked him if he ſaw a ſtar, meaning the light before mentioned: he ſaid, he did not; but in leſs than half an hour the *ſtar* was in the place appointed. They then left the horſes at a little diſtance from the houſe, not chooſing to venture into the court-yard, it being paved. On the door being opened by the lady, he aſked her if ſhe was ready; to which ſhe replied in the affirmative.—He adviſed her, however, to pack up a gown or two, as ſhe probably might not ſee her mother again for

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ſome time. The oſtler having recommended the lady's pillion to Metcalf, in preference to that of his miſtreſs, he aſked her for it:—"O dear!" ſaid ſhe, "it is in the other houſe; but we muſt have it." She then went to the window and called up her ſiſter, who let her in. The pillion and cloth were in the room where the ſuppoſed bridegroom ſlept; and on his ſeeing her enter, ſhe ſaid, "I'll take this and bruſh it, that it may be ready in the morning." "That's well thought on, my dear," ſaid he. She then came down, and all three went to the horſes. Metcalf mounted her behind his friend, then got upon his own horſe, and away they went. At that time it was not a matter of ſo much difficulty to get married as it is at preſent; and they, with only the trouble of riding twelve miles, and at a ſmall expence, were united.

Metcalf left his bride, on his return, at a friend's houſe within five miles of Harrogate, but did not diſmount, being in haſte to return the mare he had borrowed with *French leave*. A few minutes after their

return, Mr. Body, the landlord, called for his mare, to go to Knareſborough, and fortunately ſhe was ready for him.

Metcalf now went to the Queen's Head, to perform the uſual ſervice of playing during the breakfaſt half hour. His overnight's excurſion made him rather thoughtful, having got a *bird*, but no *cage* for it. While he was muſing on this ſubject, an acquaintance, who made one of the intended bridegroom's company the evening before, came up, and aſked him to take a glaſs with him. Metcalf quickly gueſſed what his buſineſs was, but adjourned with him to a private room, ſeemingly unconcerned. "Metcalf," ſaid he "a ſtrange thing has happened ſince you were with us laſt night, concerning Dolly Benſon, who was to have been married this morning to Anthony Dickinſon.—You are ſuſpected of knowing ſomething about the former; and I ſhall briefly ſtate to you the conſternation which her diſappearance has occaſioned, and the reaſons why ſuſpicion falls upon you. This morning, early, the bridegroom went to Knareſborough,

rough, and informed the Rev. Mr. Collins that he and his intended wife were coming that forenoon to be married. In his abſence Mrs. Benſon and her other daughter began to prepare for breakfaſt; and obſerving that Dolly lay very long in bed, her mother deſired that ſhe might be called; but her uſual bedfellow declaring that ſhe had not ſlept with her, ſhe was ordered to ſeek her in ſome of the other rooms. This was done, but in vain. They then took it for granted that ſhe had taken a ride with Mr. Dickinſon; but he returning, could give no account of her. All her friends began now to be very ſeriouſly alarmed; and, amongſt other fearful conjectures, ſuppoſed that ſhe might have fallen into the well, in attempting to draw water for breakfaſt; and actually got ſome iron creepers, and ſearched the well. Her brother then took horſe, and rode to Burton-Leonard, to a young man who had ſlightly paid his addreſſes to her, and, informing him of the diſtreſs of the family, begged he would give information, if in his power. The young man immediately aſked him if he had

had ſeen Blind Jack; he anſwered, that you were at the Oak laſt night, but did not in the leaſt ſuſpect you.—The other, however, perſiſted in the opinion that you were moſt likely to know where the girl was, and gave the following incident as a reaſon: Being, not long ſince, at a dance, where Miſs Benſon made one, he obſerved her wiping a profuſe perſpiration from your face, with an handkerchief; and this act was accompanied by a look ſo tender, as left no doubt in his mind of her being ſtrongly attached to you."

This narrative (a part of which was no news to Metcalf) was ſcarcely finiſhed, when young Benſon appeared; and Metcalf put an end to all inquiry, by declaring the truth: and thinking it his duty to conciliate, if poſſible, thoſe whom he had offended, he employed the ſofteſt phraſes he was maſter of on the occaſion. He begged pardon, through their ſon, of Mr. and Mrs. Benſon, whom he did not preſume to call father and mother, and wiſhed them to believe that the warmth of his paſſion for their daughter, with the deſpair of obtaining their conſent,

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had led him to the meaſures he had taken; and that he would make them the beſt amends in his power, by the affectionate conduct he ſhould obſerve to his wife.

The ſon, in part pacified, left Metcalf, and reported this declaration to his parents: but they were juſt as well pleaſed at it, as they would have been at the ſight of their building in flames; and, in the height of paſſion, declared they would put him to death, if they met with him.

The poor forlorn Dickinſon then departed, accompanied by one of Mr. Benſon's ſons. When they got near his home, they heard two ſets of bells, viz. thoſe of Folifoot and Kirby Overblow, ringing, in expectation of the arrival of the bride and groom; but the ſound was more like that of a knell to Dickinſon, who fell from his horſe through anguiſh, but was relieved by the attention of his friend. The company were ſurpriſed at not ſeeing the bride; but matters were ſoon explained, and they were deſired to partake of the fare provided for them.

Metcalf

Metcalf not being able, at once, to procure a *Palace* for his *Queen*, took a ſmall houſe at Knareſborough. It now became matter of wonder that ſhe ſhould have preferred a blind man to Dickinſon, ſhe being as handſome a woman as any in the country. A lady having aſked her why ſhe had refuſed ſo many good offers for Blind Jack; ſhe anſwered, "Becauſe I could not be happy without him:" And being more particularly queſtioned, ſhe replied, "His actions are ſo ſingular, and his ſpirit ſo manly and enterpriſing, that I could not help liking him." Metcalf being interrogated, on his part, how he had contrived to obtain the lady, replied, That many women were like liquor-merchants, who purchaſe ſpirits above proof, knowing that they can *lower* them at home; and this, he thought, would account why many a rake got a wife, while your plodding ſons of phlegm were doomed to celibacy.

He now went to Harrogate, as uſual, with the exception of *one* houſe. Meeting with a butcher there one day, and drinking pretty freely,

freely, a wager was propoſed to Metcalf, that he durſt not viſit his mother-in-law. He took the wager, mounted his horſe, and riding up to the kitchen-door, called for a pint of wine. There being then only women in the houſe, they all ran up ſtairs in a fright. He then rode into the kitchen, through the houſe, and out at the hall-door, no one moleſting him. As there were many evidences to this act of *heroiſm*, he returned, and demanding the ſtakes, received them without oppoſition.

The Harrogate ſeaſon being on the decline, he retired to Knareſborough, where he purchaſed an old houſe, intending to build on its ſcite the next ſummer. Aſſiſted by another ſtout man, he began to get ſtones up from the river; and being much uſed to the water, took great delight in this ſort of work. Meeting with ſome workmen, he told them the intended dimenſions of his houſe, and they named a price, by the rood, for building it: but Metcalf, calculating from his own head, found that their eſtimate would

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not do; ſo letting them the job by lump agreement, they completed it at about half the ſum which they would have got by the rood.

He now went to the Oak, to demand his wife's cloaths, but was refuſed: on a ſecond application, however, he ſucceeded. His wife having brought him a boy, and ſome genteel people being the ſponſors, they employed their good offices to heal the breach between the families, and were ſo fortunate as to ſucceed. On the birth of a daughter (the ſecond child) Mrs. Benſon herſelf was godmother, and preſented Metcalf with fifty guineas.

He continued to play at Harrogate in the ſeaſon; and ſet up a four-wheel chaiſe, and a one-horſe chair, for public accommodation, there having been nothing of the kind there before.—He kept thoſe vehicles two ſummers, when the innkeepers beginning to run chaiſes, he gave them up; as he alſo did racing, and hunting; but ſtill wanting employment, he bought horſes, and went to

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the coaſt for fiſh, which he took to Leeds and Mancheſter; and ſo indefatigable was he, that he would frequently walk for two nights and a day, with little or no reſt.

Going from Knareſborough to Leeds in a ſnow-ſtorm, and croſſing a brook, the ice gave way under one of his horſes, and he was under the neceſſity of unloading to get him out; but the horſe as ſoon as free ran back to Knareſborough, leaving him with two panniers of fiſh, and three other loaded horſes, which, together with the badneſs of the night, greatly perplexed him:—After much difficulty, however, he divided the weight amongſt the others, and purſuing his journey, arrived at Leeds by break of day.

Once paſſing through Halifax, he ſtopped at an inn called the Broad Stone. The landlord's ſon and ſome others who frequented Harrogate ſeeing Metcalf come in, and having often heard of his exploits, ſignified a wiſh to play at cards with him: he agreed, and accordingly they ſent for a pack, which he deſired to examine a little. The man of

the houſe being his friend, he could depend upon his honour in preventing deception. They began, and Metcalf beat four of them in turn; playing for liquor only. Not ſatiſfied with this, ſome of the company propoſed playing for money; when engaging at ſhilling whiſt, Metcalf won fifteen ſhillings. The party who loſt then propoſed to play double or quit, but Metcalf declined playing for more than ſhilling points; till at laſt yielding to much importunity, he got engaged for guineas, and, favoured by fortune, won ten, the whole ſum late in the poſſeſſion of the loſer, who took up the cards, and going out, ſoon returned with eight guineas more: Metcalf's friend examined the cards, to ſee that they were not marked; and finding all fair, they went on again, until thoſe eight pieces followed the other ten. They then drank freely at Metcalf's coſt, he being in good circumſtances to treat. About ten at night he took his leave, ſaying he muſt be at Knareſborough in the morning, having ſent his horſes before. On his way he croſ-

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ſed the river Wharfe about a mile below Poole: the water being high, his horſe ſwam, but he got ſafe home; and this ended his purſuits as a fiſhmonger, the profits being ſmall, and his fatigue very conſiderable.

From the period of his diſcontinuing the buſineſs of fiſhmonger, Metcalf continued in the practice of attending Harrogate, as a player on the violin in the Long-room, until the commencement of the Rebellion in 1745.

The events of that period having been ſo numerouſly and ſo minutely detailed, that any one the leaſt converſant in the hiſtory of this country cannot be unacquainted with the origin, progreſs, and termination of the civil commotions which agitated it,—it would appear unneceſſary to obtrude the narration of them here, further than may ſeem needful to introduce the part in which Metcalf bore a perſonal ſhare. The circumſtance of his commencing ſoldier, was at that time, and will ſtill by the reader, be looked upon as a very extraordinary proceeding of one in his ſituation.

The alarm which took place, in conſequence of that event, was general; and loyalty to the reigning Sovereign, and Government, with meaſures for reſiſtance to the Rebel Party, ſhone no where more conſpicuous than in the County of York.

Amongſt the many inſtances which mark this, none were more ſtriking than the ſignally-gallant conduct of the late WILLIAM THORNTON, Eſq; of Thornville.

The opinion of that gentleman, as delivered at the General County Meeting held at the Caſtle of York, was, that the four thouſand men, (for the raiſing, cloathing, and maintaining of which *ninety thouſand pounds* had been ſubſcribed) ſhould be embodied in companies with the regulars, and march with the King's forces to any part where their ſervices might be required.—This mode of proceeding, however, not meeting the opinion of the majority of the gentlemen preſent, he determined to raiſe a company at his own expence.

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In conſequence of that reſolution, Mr. Thornton went to Knareſborough about the firſt of October, 1745; and Metcalf having for ſeveral years been in the practice of viſiting that gentleman's manſion, (particularly at the feſtive ſeaſon of Chriſtmas, where, with his violin and hautboy, he aſſiſted to entertain the family) Mr. Thornton was well acquainted with his extraordinary diſpoſition, and, imagining that he might be of ſervice to him in his preſent undertaking, ſent for our blind hero to his inn, treated him liberally with punch, and, informing him "that the French were coming to join the Scotch rebels, the conſequence of which would be, that if not vigouroufly oppoſed, they would violate all our wives, daughters, and ſiſters," aſked him if he had ſpirit to join the company about to be raiſed. Metcalf inſtantly giving an affirmative anſwer, was aſked whether he knew of any ſpirited fellows who were likely to make good ſoldiers; and having ſatisfied his patron on this head alſo, he was appointed an aſſiſtant to a ſerjeant already procured,

with orders to begin recruiting the next day. This ſervice went on with rapid ſucceſs: ſeveral carpenters, ſmiths, and other artificers were engaged, to all of whom Metcalf promiſed great military advancement, or, in default of that, places of vaſt profit under Government, as ſoon as the matter was over, which he called only a *buſtle;* thus following the example of other *decoy ducks*, by promiſing very unlikely things.

Such was their ſucceſs, that in two days only they enliſted one hundred and forty men, out of whom the Captain drafted ſixty-four, (the number of privates he wanted) and ſent immediately to Leeds for cloth of a good quality for their cloathing. The coats were blue, trimmed and faced with buff; and buff waiſtcoats. The taylors he had employed refuſing to work on a Sunday, he rebuked their fanatical ſcruples in theſe words: "You raſcals! if your houſes were on fire, would you not be glad to extinguiſh the flames on a *Sunday?*" which had the de-

desired effect. Arms being procured from the Tower, the men were constantly and regularly drilled. Such of them as had relations in the public line, would frequently bring their companions to drink, for the benefit of the respective houses; and Metcalf never failed to attend one or other of those parties, his fiddle and hautboy contributing to make the time pass agreeably: and the worthy Captain was liberal in his allowance of money for such festive purposes, insomuch that had he wanted five hundred men, he could easily have obtained them. Soon after he brought them to Thornville, where he ordered every other day a fat ox to be killed for their entertainment, and gave them beer seven years old, expressing a great pleasure at its being reserved for so good a purpose.

He now began to sound the company as to their attachment to the cause and to himself. "My lads," said he, "you are going to form a part of a ring-fence to the finest estate in the world! The King's army is on its march to the Northward; and I have

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the pleaſing confidence that all of you are willing to join them."—They replied, as if one ſoul had animated them, "We will follow you to the world's end!"

All matters being adjuſted, the company was drawn up, and amongſt them BLIND JACK made no *ſmall* figure, being near ſix feet two inches high, and, like his companions, dreſſed in blue and buff, with a large gold-laced hat: So well pleaſed was the Captain with his appearance, that he ſaid he would give an hundred guineas for only *one eye* to ſtick in the head of his *dark* champion.

Jack now played a march of the Captain's chooſing, and off they moved for Boroughbridge. Capt. Thornton having a diſcretionary route, took his march over the moors, in expectation of meeting ſome of the ſtraggling parties of the rebel army; and quartered at ſeveral villages in his way, where he was kindly received, and viſited by the heads of the genteeleſt families in the neighbourhood, who generally ſpent the evenings with him. Metcalf being always at the Captain's quar-

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ters, played on the violin, accompanied by a good voice, "*Britons! ſtrike home,*" and other loyal and popular airs, much to the ſatisfaction of the viſitors, who frequently offered him money, but this he always refuſed, knowing that his acceptance of it would diſpleaſe his commander.

Arriving at Newcaſtle, they joined the army under the command of General Wade, by whoſe order they were united with Pulteney's regiment, which, having ſuffered much in ſome late actions abroad, was thought the weakeſt. Captain Thornton gave orders for tents for his men, and a marquee for himſelf, for which he paid the upholſterer eighty guineas. He pitched them on Newcaſtle Moor, and gave a pair of blankets to each tent. Jack obſerved to his Captain, "Sir, I live next door to you: but it is a cuſtom, on coming to a new houſe, to have it warmed." The Captain knowing his meaning, ſaid, "How much will do?"—Jack anſwered, "Three ſhillings a tent;" which the Captain generouſly gave, and ſaid,

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"As you join Pulteney's regiment, they will ſmell your breath;" ſo he gave them ten guineas, being one to each company. On the night of their entertainment, the ſnow fell ſix inches.

After ſtopping here for about a week, the General received intelligence of the motions of the rebels, and gave orders to march by break of day for Hexham, in three columns, wiſhing to intercept them upon the Weſt road, as their route ſeemed to be for England that way. The tents were inſtantly ſtruck; but the Swiſs troops having the van, and not being willing to move at ſo early an hour, it was half paſt ten before they left the ground, and the ſnow by that time was become extremely deep in ſeveral places: it alſo proved a very ſevere day for hail and froſt. They were often three or four hours in marching a mile, the pioneers having to lower the hills, and fill up ſeveral ditches, to make a paſſage for the artillery and baggage.

About ten at night they arrived at Ovington, the place marked out for them, with ſtraw

ſtraw to reſt on; but the ground was frozen ſo hard, that but few of the tent-pins would enter it, and in thoſe few tents which were pitched, the men lay one upon another, greatly fatigued with their march, it having been fifteen hours from the time of their ſtriking the tents, till their arrival at this place, although the diſtance is only ſeven miles.

At eleven o'clock at night Captain Thornton left the camp, and went to Hexham, to viſit his relation, Sir Edward Blacket, and with a view of getting proviſions and neceſſaries for his men: he was only nine hours abſent, as, although it was Sunday morning, the march was to be continued. It having been cuſtomary to burn the ſtraw, to warm the men before they ſet off, orders were here given to preſerve it, in caſe it might be wanted on their return. However, Captain Thornton and the Lieutenant being abſent, and the Enſign having died at Newcaſtle, Metcalf took it upon him to ſay, "My lads, get the ſtraw together, to burn; our Captain will

will pay for more, if we ſhould want it:" which being done, he took out his fiddle, notwithſtanding the day, and played to the men whilſt they danced round the fire; which made the reſt of the army obſerve them, though they did not follow their example. The Captain and Lieutenant arriving in the midſt of the buſineſs, expreſſed much pleaſure and ſatisfaction in ſeeing the men thus recreate themſelves.

That day they reached Hexham, where they halted. On Monday night, about ten o'clock, the army was put in motion by a falſe alarm. Here General Wade reſolved to return; and immediately began the march for York, by way of Pierſebridge, Catterick, and Boroughbridge; and continuing his route Southward, encamped his men on Clifford Moor, where they halted a few days, and then moved to a ground between Ferrybridge and Knottingley. The rebels had now penetrated Southward as far as Derby; but the General having heard that they had received a check from the Duke of Cumberland,

land, ſent General Oglethorpe with a thouſand horſe towards Mancheſter, either to harraſs the enemy in their retreat, or to join the Duke's forces; and returned himſelf with the remainder, by Wakefield-Outwood, and Leeds, to Newcaſtle.

In the mean time the Duke came up with the rebels at Clifton, on the borders of Weſtmoreland, of which Lord George Murray, with the rear guard, had taken poſſeſſion, whilſt another party had fortified themſelves behind three hedges and a ditch.

The Duke coming upon the open moor after ſun-ſet, gave orders for three hundred dragoons to diſmount, and advance to the brink of the ditch; when the rebels fired upon them from behind the hedges, which they returned, and fell a few paces back: the rebels miſtaking this for flight, ruſhed over the ditch, but meeting a warmer reception than they expected, were glad to retreat, and continued their route to Penrith.

The Duke's army was not able to follow, owing to the badneſs of the roads, and the

fatigue of a tedious march; but the next morning he purſued them to Penrith; and from thence to Carliſle, where they left part of their army.

His Royal Highneſs thought it adviſable to reduce this place, and accordingly ſent for heavy artillery from Whitehaven, which arriving on the 25th of December, the garriſon ſurrendered on the 30th, and his Royal Highneſs returned to London. General Wade continued his march for the North, diſmiſſing all the foreigners from his army; and General Hawley on coming from London to take the command, was joined by ſome regiments which had been withdrawn from Flanders. They marched to Edinburgh; from thence to Falkirk, and pitched their tents on the North-Eaſt ſide of the town, on the 16th of January.

The Highland army being at Torwood, about mid-way between Falkirk and Stirling, and diſtant from the Engliſh camp only about three miles, they could eaſily diſcover each other's camp-lights. The Engliſh army lay

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all night on their arms, in expectation of being attacked; but the van and picquet guards came in on the morning of the 17th, having obſerved no motions in the rebel camp which ſhewed any ſigns of an attack, although they were as near them as ſafety would permit. Soon after, the enemy were obſerved to move ſome of their colours from Torwood, towards Stirling, which made the Engliſh ſuppoſe that they were retreating; but this motion was a feint to deceive them. However, upon this appearance, the ſoldiers were ordered to pile their arms, and take ſome refreſhment; and although Lord Kilmarnock was in the rebel army, General Hawley went to breakfaſt with Lady Kilmarnock, at Callendar-Houſe. The enemy, in the mean time, ſtole a march down a valley Northward, unperceived; but juſt before the army diſcovered them, they were ſeen by a perſon who ran into the camp, exclaiming, "Gentlemen! what are you about? the Highlanders will be upon you:" on which ſome of the officers ſaid, "Seize that raſcal,

he is ſpreading a falſe alarm."—"Will you, then, believe your own eyes?" replied the man; when inſtantly the truth of his aſſertion became apparent, by their advancing to the higheſt ground upon Falkirk moor, the wind blowing ſtrongly in the faces of the Engliſh, with a ſevere rain. At this moment ſeveral had left the field as well as the General; but the drums beat to arms, which cauſed thoſe who were abſent to repair inſtantly to the camp, and the lines were immediately formed.

Captain Thornton's company was embodied with the matroſſes, who were thought too weak; and this was a great diſappointment to him, whoſe intention was to be in the front, whenever an engagement ſhould take place. Metcalf played before them to the field; but the flag cannon ſinking in a bog, Captain Thornton exclaimed, "D—n this accident; we ſhall ſee no ſport to-day:" and leaving his troop to aſſiſt the matroſſes in bringing up the cannon to their ſtation, he rode up oppoſite to the horſe which were

going

going to engage. The regiments of Hamilton and Gardner were put in the front; and the Highlanders, after firing their pieces, threw them down, and discharged their pistols in the horses' faces, which caused them to retreat, much confused: and on the Duke of Perth exclaiming aloud, "Although the horse have given way, yet the work is not accomplished," the enemy pursued with their broad swords, cutting down the men as they fled; and the horses did great mischief, by breaking through their own foot, the men crying out at the same time, "Dear brethren, we shall all be massacred this day!" On their passing the artillery, the Captain of the matrosses seeing their perilous situation, gave orders for all the train horses to be cut from the cannon. General Huske at this time came up with three regiments, and engaged the left wing of the Highlanders, ordering the rear and centre to keep firing, and the front to reserve. The rebels, as was their custom, after the discharge of their pieces, flung them away, and advanced with their

broad ſwords cloſe up to the firſt line; when the front inſtantly fired, and being ſo near, did more than double execution; which cauſed them to retreat, leaving a great number dead upon the ſpot.

The General obſerving a vaſt body of the rebels on the right, drew up his men nearer Falkirk, and gave orders to keep the town until morning: however, on examining the powder, they had the mortification to find that the heavy rains had damaged it to ſuch a degree, that but few pieces could be fired; and the village being open on all ſides, was a circumſtance ſo favourable to the enemy, as induced that General to form the reſolution of quitting the town with all expedition, and march to Linlithgow, where there was more ſhelter under the walls, in caſe of an attack.—This meaſure was fully juſtified by the event; for the enemy purſued ſo cloſely, that many were taken by ſurpriſe, as, in conſequence of the order to keep the town all night, ſeveral had gone into the houſes to put off their wet cloathes; and thoſe who

were

were appriſed of the retreat had no ſooner left the place, than the rebels took poſſeſſion, and made a great many priſoners, amongſt whom were twenty of Captain Thornton's men, with the Lieutenant and Enſign.

Mr. Crofts, the Lieutenant, having eighty guineas in his pocket, begged to make Lord George Murray his treaſurer; which office his Lordſhip accepted, and had afterwards the *generoſity* to return him SIX!

Captain Thornton, alſo, was in one of the houſes, for the purpoſe before-mentioned, but had not time ſufficient to effect his eſcape; and being alarmed by the bagpipes at the door, he retreated up ſtairs: in a few minutes ſeveral of the rebels ruſhed up, in ſearch of the fugitives; when one of them came to the very room door behind which he had taken refuge, and overlooking him, ſaid, "Here are none of the raſcals here." The woman of the houſe having ſeen the Captain go up ſtairs, went to him ſoon after, and opening a cloſet door, entreated him to enter, which he did.—She then brought

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a dreſſer, and placed diſhes, &c. upon it, which prevented all appearance of a door in that place; and fortunately there was no bed in the room. About ten minutes after he had been fixed in his new quarters, a great number of people, conſiſting chiefly of Highland officers, amongſt whom was Secretary Murray, took poſſeſſion of the apartment, which being large, they propoſed making uſe of for buſineſs during their ſtay.

We will there leave Captain Thornton, and return to Metcalf, who with the matroſſes was retiring from the field of battle.

Knowing that two of his maſter's horſes had been left at a widow's houſe a ſhort diſtance from the town, he made his way to the place, with intent to ſecure them. This woman had in the morning expreſſed great ſeeming loyalty to King George; but when Metcalf returned in the evening, the wind had changed:—She now extolled Prince Charles, and ſaid the defeat of *George's folk* was a juſt judgment.

Metcalf

Metcalf went into the ſtable and found the horſes, ſaddled them, and was leading out the firſt, when he was ſurrounded by a few ſtragglers of the Highland army: "We muſt have that beaſt," ſaid they; but Metcalf refuſing to give him up, they ſaid to one another, "Shoot him." On hearing two of them cock their pieces, he aſked, "What do you want with him?"—They anſwered, that they wanted him for their Prince: "If ſo, you muſt have him," replied he. They took him, and immediately went off. Metcalf then brought out the other; but as he was about to mount, the Captain's coachman (whoſe name was Snowden) joined him, and Metcalf inquiring of him the fate of his maſter, was anſwered, that he had not ſeen him ſince he left the artillery, when he rode up with the horſe which were going to engage: this induced them to think that the worſt had befallen him. They then thought it adviſable to attempt falling in with the rear of the army, and endeavoured to ſlant the ground for that purpoſe; but before they had

had proceeded many yards, their horſe ſunk up to the ſaddle-ſkirts in a bog: however, being ſtrong and plunging out, they mounted again, and ſoon joined it as they wiſhed; where on making diligent inquiry after their Captain, they were told that he was left behind; on which Snowden returned as far as he could with ſafety, but without gaining any intelligence, and Metcalf walked on with the army.

They arrived at Linlithgow, where they halted; and the next day they marched to Edinburgh. There the mob, and lower orders of people, were very free in their expreſſions, and ſome of the higher alſo ſpoke very warmly, in favour of Prince Charles; making it appear clearly, *by their own account*, that nothing could prevent his coming to the Crown.

The next morning as many of Captain Thornton's men as had eſcaped being taken priſoners, (about forty-eight in number,) aſſembled; and none of them being quite certain of having ſeen the Captain ſince he left

left them with the cannon in the bog, they ſuppoſed him to have ſhared the fate of many other brave men who had fallen in the action of that day, and which they all ſincerely lamented—not only on account of the favours he had individually conferred on them, but for the great and liberal example which he had invariably ſhewn to his brother officers, in the care and attention which he paid to his men in general; the natural conſequence of which was, that he poſſeſſed the love and confidence of the ſoldiery. The diſappearance, alſo, of the two other officers, and twenty of their men, greatly diſpirited them; and, together with the ſuſpenſion from their regular pay, induced ſome of them to apply to Metcalf for a ſupply, in order to carry them home; but he laudably refuſed any aid he might have afforded them, on being informed of the purpoſe for which it was required.

The army being fixed at Edinburgh, the head-quarters were at the Abbey. The ſuperior officers ſent for Metcalf, thinking it

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a ſingular circumſtance that a perſon deprived of ſight ſhould enter into the army; and knowing that his maſter was miſſing, they deſired to converſe with him. One of the officers belonging to the dragoons who retreated from Falkirk ſpeaking ironically of Thornton's men, aſked Jack how *he* got off the field of battle.—Metcalf anſwered, "I found it very eaſy to follow by the ſound of the dragoon horſes, they made ſuch a *clatter* over the ſtones." This reply made the gentlemen turn the laugh againſt him. Colonel Cockayne likewiſe aſked how he durſt venture into the ſervice, blind as he was; to which he replied, "that had he poſſeſſed a pair of good eyes, he would never have come there to have riſked the loſs of them by gunpowder." Then making his obeiſance, he withdrew: For Metcalf, though he had not *read books*, had read *men;* and received his knowledge from the ſchool of the world.

He now determined upon a journey to Falkirk, in ſearch of his Captain; but this being attended with difficulty, he applied to a

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Knareſborough man who lived at Edinburgh and was of the rebel party, telling him that he wiſhed to be a muſician to Prince Charles, as he found it was all over with the Engliſh. The man informed him that they had a ſpy, an Iriſhman, going to the Prince; on which Metcalf ſet forward with him, and he promiſed to recommend him on their arrival at Falkirk; but on coming up to the Engliſh out-ſentries, they were ſtopped:—Metcalf inquired for the Captain, and informed him of the real cauſe of his journey: by him he was kindly adviſed to lay aſide his project, and told that he would loſe his life; but ſtill perſiſting, he proceeded with the ſpy, and arrived at Linlithgow, where they ſtayed all night. They met with ſeveral women who had been upon plunder, and were then on their return to Edinburgh; and the ſpy inſtructed them how to avoid the Engliſh ſentries. Metcalf was very careful to examine the cloathes they had got, thinking that by chance he might meet with ſome of his Captain's, ignorant as he was of his fate.

One of the women ſent a token by Metcalf to her huſband, who was Lord George Murray's cook: this woman's guide was a horſe-dealer, who ſoon became acquainted with Metcalf, having frequented the fairs in Yorkſhire; and at this time by ſome means had got introduced to the heads of both armies, and obtained a protection from each to preſs horſes occaſionally.—This man's fate was remarkable; for going into Stirling, where the King's army lay, he found that orders were given to let no ſtrangers paſs without an examination, which he underwent, and ſaid that he had a protection from General Huſke: being ordered to produce it, he had the misfortune to take that out of his pocket which he had got from the Pretender; and when informed of his miſtake, inſtantly produced the other—but too late; for he was tied up by the neck to a lamp-iron, without giving him time to put off his boots.

A ſhort time before Metcalf and the ſpy left the 'Change-houſe at Linlithgow, ſome of the van guard of the rebels came in, and called

called for whiſkey; and it was ſuppoſed that they dropped there a ſilver-mounted piſtol, which, on their ſetting out, the ſpy picked up, and offered to Metcalf; but he refuſed it, ſaying, he thought it not proper to have fire-arms about him, as he expected to be ſearched: ſo they purſued their journey and preſently fell in with the rebels out-guard, ſeveral of whom accoſted Metcalf, and as all ſeemed well, they were allowed to paſs, and arrived at Falkirk, where he inquired for Lord George Murray's cook, to deliver his preſent, and was afterwards introduced to and converſed with his Lordſhip, Secretary Murray, and other gentlemen. Lord George gave him part of a glaſs of wine, an article at that time of great value; for as the rebels had been there three times, and the Engliſh twice, they had almoſt *ſwept the cupboard clean of its crumbs.*

Whilſt converſing with them, he was very circumſpect, knowing that his life was in danger, if the real purpoſe of his journey ſhould be diſcovered.

He then made his way towards the market-place, where a number of Highlanders were aſſembled.—This was on Wedneſday the 22d; but it happened that his maſter had left the place that morning, about four hours before his arrival.

We will now return to Captain Thornton, whom we left on Friday in the cloſet, in cloſe neighbourhood with the Highland Chiefs, who every day tranſacted buſineſs in the room. The Quarter-Maſters of the rebel army having taken the houſe, had given the woman to whom it belonged a ſmall apartment backward; but every night ſhe took care to carry him ſuch proviſions as ſhe could convey through a crevice at the bottom of the door; and this mode ſhe uſed for fear of alarming thoſe who ſlept in the adjoining rooms. The cloſet was only a yard and a half ſquare; and the Captain's cloathes being wet when he entered, made his ſituation the more uncomfortable, as he had got a ſevere cold, and ſometimes could not forbear coughing, even when the rebels were in their room. Once

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in particular, hearing a cough, they ſaid one to another "what is that?" but one of them anſwered, that it was ſomebody in another room;—not in the leaſt ſuſpecting a door in the place where the cloſet was.

On Monday night the woman of the houſe went to the door to carry proviſions as uſual, when the Captain ſaid to her, "I am determined to come out, let the conſequence be what it may; for I will not die like a dog in this hole;" but ſhe begged that he would bear his confinement till the next night, and ſhe would adopt ſome plan to effect his eſcape. She accordingly conſulted an old carpenter, who was true to the Royal cauſe, and he came the next night, removed the dreſſer, and liberated the Captain. They proceeded down ſtairs in the dark, to the woman's apartment, where ſhe made tea, whilſt the carpenter concerted their plan of operation. They dreſſed him in a pladdie and brogues, with a black wig, and the carpenter packed him up a bag of tools, as if he was going with his maſter to work as ſoon as it was

light. The Captain had only ten guineas about him, (having loſt his caſh with his Lieutenant, Mr. Crofts) eight of which he gave to the woman who had ſo faithfully preſerved him, and two to the carpenter, who, to ſecrete them, put them into his mouth along with his tobacco, fearful of a ſearch by the Highlanders, who would have ſuſpected him had they found more than a ſhilling. Every thing being ready, they ſet out, the Captain with his bag of tools following his ſuppoſed maſter. On coming into the croud, he looked about, and was rather behind; and although in diſguiſe, did not look like a common workman;—which making the old man dread a diſcovery, he called out to him, "Come alang, ye filthy loon: ye have had half a bannock and a mutchkin of drink in your wame—we ſhall be too late for our day's wark." Whether this artifice ſerved him or not, is uncertain; but they got ſafe through the throng, and, leaving the high-road, purſued their journey acroſs the country. Having come to a riſing ground,

ground, the Captain took a view of Falkirk moor, and ſaid, "Yonder's the place where ſuch a ſad piece of work was made of it on Friday laſt." The old man at the ſame time looking the other way, ſaw two or three hundred Highlanders, who had been on plunder, coming down a lane which led from Callendar-Houſe (Lord Kilmarnock's ſeat) into the main road; and being deſirous of paſſing the end of this lane before they came up, in order to avoid them, ſaid, "We ſhall have a worſe piece of work of it than we had on Friday, if you do not haſten your pace;" and begged the Captain to come forward, which he did; but walking briſkly up a hill, he ſuddenly ſtopped, and ſaid, "I am ſick:" however they gained their point, and paſſed the Highlanders; for had they come up with them, the leaſt injury would have been a march back to Falkirk, as priſoners. On going two miles farther, they arrived at a houſe belonging to a friend of the carpenter's, and which had been plundered: there the old man got an egg, but not being able to find

find a pan to boil it, he roaſted it in peat-aſhes, and gave it to the Captain, to put in his *wame*, for ſo he called his ſtomach. Proceeding a few miles farther, they arrived at another houſe, where they procured a horſe for the Captain.—He arrived at the Engliſh out-poſts, and making himſelf known was permitted to paſs, and reached Edinburgh in ſafety.

With reſpect to Metcalf, whom we left at Falkirk, as his dreſs was a plaid waiſtcoat laced with gold, which he had borrowed of a friend at Edinburgh, together with a blue regimental coat faced with buff, he told the Highlanders, in anſwer to their inquiries, that he had been fiddling for the Engliſh officers, and that they had given him that coat, which had belonged to a man who was killed; and alſo that his intention was to ſerve in the ſame capacity with Prince Charles.—But a perſon coming up who had ſeen Jack at Harrogate, ſaid, "That fellow ought to be taken up, for he has ſomething more than common in his proceedings;" on which

which Metcalf was taken to the guard-room, and ſearched for letters, but none were found, having only a pack of cards in his pocket, which they ſplit, to ſee whether they contained any writing in the folds, but finding none, he was put into a loft in the roof of the building, (where the ſnow came in very much) along with a dragoon, and ſome other priſoners, where for three days they were ſuffered to remain in confinement.

In a ſhort time Metcalf and his fellow-priſoners were tried by a court-martial, at which he was acquitted, and had permiſſion given to go to the Prince; but wanting to borrow a clean ſhirt, they aſked him where his own were; he ſaid, at Linlithgow, but that he durſt not go there, on account of *George's devils*. They told him that he might ſafely go with the Iriſhman he came with. He knew that his companion had letters for the Highlanders' friends at Edinburgh, but had no intention to paſs the Engliſh ſentries. Metcalf amuſed him with aſſurances that he had ten pounds at Edinburgh,

burgh, for which he ſhould have no occaſion if he joined the Prince, and that he might have the greateſt part of it: the ſpy, on this, became extremely deſirous of his company to Edinburgh, wiſhing to finger the money, and propoſed going acroſs the country; but Metcalf ſaid that *he* could paſs the Engliſh ſentries, by ſaying that he was going to Captain Thornton. They then proceeded, and after going two miles, they met an officer, who was reconnoitring, and he knowing Metcalf, told him that his maſter was arrived at Edinburgh, which news was highly pleaſing to him. On leaving the officer, the ſpy accoſted him with "So, what you *are* going to him."—"No," ſaid Metcalf, "nor to any ſuch fellows." They then paſſed the ſentry, as Metcalf propoſed, and arrived at Edinburgh, where they parted, but promiſed to meet the next evening at nine o'clock. Jack went directly to his Captain, who rejoiced at ſo unexpected a meeting. Metcalf told him that he had given him a great deal of trouble; adding, that he thought people might

might come home from market without fetching.—The Captain ſmiled, and ſaid, "What is to be done, for I have neither money or cloathes, having left all behind at Falkirk; but I have bills upon the road to the amount of three hundred pounds?" This proved fortunate; for had they been a few days ſooner, they might by chance have been loſt alſo;—but the reaſon of this delay was, that all letters, directed to Scotland, were at this time ſent to London, to be examined at the General Poſt-Office. Metcalf told the Captain that he could get him ſome money, which the other thought impoſſible: however he went to a known friend, and obtained thirty pounds.—Taylors were inſtantly ſet to work, and next morning the Captain was enabled to viſit his brother officers at the Abbey.

The army ſtill quartered at Edinburgh, while part of the rebels were in Falkirk, and another part at Stirling, where they raiſed ſeveral batteries, and beſieged Stirling Caſtle. The governor, General Blakeney, made little oppo-

oppoſition; and a ſhot from the batteries killing two or three men, ſome of the officers were greatly enraged, and threatened to confine the Governor: But a little time ſhewed that he was right in his conduct; for letting the rebels come pretty near the walls, on a ſudden he began ſo hot a fire, as to kill ſeveral of their men, demoliſhing their batteries, and diſmounting their guns, which made them glad to retreat, and raiſe the ſiege: and the General having deſtroyed the bridge, they were obliged to make a circuitous march before they were able to ford the river.

The Duke of Cumberland arrived at Edinburgh on the 30th of January, 1746; and two days afterwards marched out at the head of the army, towards Falkirk, the rebels leaving it a little time before. Captain Thornton viſited the Duke often: his Royal Highneſs took notice of Metcalf, and ſpoke to him ſeveral times on the march, obſerving how well by the ſound of the drum he was able to keep his pace. On the army's arri-

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val at Linlithgow, intelligence was received that the rebels were on their march to give them battle; upon which the army was drawn up in order, and the Duke rode through the lines, and addreſſed the men as follows: "If there be any who think themſelves in a bad cauſe, or are afraid to engage, thinking they may fight againſt any of their relations, let them now turn out, receive pardon, and go about their buſineſs, without any farther queſtion."—On this, the whole army gave three huzzas. But the intelligence proving falſe, they proceeded to Falkirk, and continued their route through Stirling, Perth, Montroſe, Briffin, and Stonehive, to Aberdeen, where they halted. The rebel army lay now at Strathbogie.

At Aberdeen the Duke gave a ball to the ladies, and perſonally ſolicited Captain Thornton for his fidler, there being at that time no muſic in the army except Colonel Howard's, (the Old Buffs) and which being wind muſic were unaccuſtomed to country dances. As the rebel army was only twenty miles diſtant,

no invitations were ſent till five o'clock, tho' the ball was to begin at ſix. Twenty-five couple danced for eight hours, and his Royal Highneſs made one of the ſet, and ſeveral times, as he paſſed Metcalf, who ſtood on a chair to play, ſhouted "Thornton, play up:" but Jack needed no exhortation, for he was very well practiſed, and better inclined.

Next morning the Duke ſent him two guineas; but as he was not permitted to take money, he informed his Captain, who ſaid, that as it was the Duke's money, he might take it; but obſerved, that he ſhould give his Royal Highneſs's ſervants a treat. He had only three ſervants with him, (viz. his gentleman, cook, and groom.) So the next night two of them paid Metcalf a viſit, and a merry party they made, the Captain ordering them great plenty of liquor.

In a little time they proceeded on their march, and engaged the rebels on Culloden moor, giving them a total defeat, although they had targets to ward off the bayonet, whilſt they cut away with their broad ſwords,

yet

yet the Duke found a method of fruſtrating their plan, by puſhing the bayonet over the right arm, which rendered their targets of no uſe. Kingſton's Light Horſe purſued them in their diſorder and flight, and made a great ſlaughter amongſt them.

The Engliſh priſoners were now all liberated.—Two or three of Captain Thornton's men had died in priſon; and the reſt returned home.

The rebellion being completely ſuppreſſed, Captain Thornton returned home alſo, accompanied by Metcalf, of whoſe family it is full time to take ſome notice.—He had the happineſs to find his faithful partner and children in good health; and although the former confeſſed that ſhe had entertained many fears for her poor blind adventurer, yet knowing that a ſpirit of enterprize made a part of his nature, ſhe was often comforted by the hope, that he would, in ſome degree, ſignalize himſelf, notwithſtanding the misfortune under which he laboured.—This declaration, following a moſt cordial reception,

gave full confirmation to an opinion which Metcalf had ever held, viz. that the careſſes and approbation of the ſofter ſex, are the higheſt reward a ſoldier can deſerve or obtain.

The notice with which the Duke of Cumberland had honoured Metcalf, gave him much reaſon to believe, that, had he followed him to London, he would have received more marks of his Royal favour.—But Metcalf was deficient to himſelf in this inſtance; neglecting to ſolicit further notice till it was judged too late to make application.

About a year after their return, a vacancy happening in the repreſentation for the city of York, the citizens ſent for Mr. Thornton, and unanimouſly elected him, free of all expence.

A ſhort time after this, the militia was raiſed, and he was, as his merit well entitled him to be, appointed Colonel of the Weſt-York battalion; which ſituation he held, with advantage to the ſervice, and honour to himſelf, for the remainder of his life.

Blind

Blind Jack being now at liberty to chooſe his occupation, attended Harrogate as uſual; but having, in the courſe of his Scotch expedition, become acquainted with the various articles manufactured in that country, and judging that ſome of thoſe might anſwer for him to traffic with in England, he repaired, in the ſpring, to Scotland, and ſupplied himſelf with various articles in the cotton and worſted way, particularly Aberdeen ſtockings. For all thoſe articles he found a ready ſale at the houſes of gentlemen in the extenſive County of York; and being perſonally known to moſt of the families, was ever very kindly received. He never was at a loſs to know, amongſt a thouſand articles, what each had coſt him, from a particular mode of marking.

It was alſo cuſtomary with him to buy horſes, for ſale in Scotland, bringing back galloways in return; and in this traffic he depended on feeling the animals, to direct his choice.

He alſo engaged pretty deeply in the contraband trade, the profits of which were at that time much more conſiderable than the riſk.

One time in particular, having received a preſſing letter from Newcaſtle-upon-Tyne, requiring his ſpeedy attendance, he ſet out on horſeback from Knareſborough at three in the morning, and got into Newcaſtle in the evening about ſix o'clock, the diſtance nearly ſeventy-four miles, and did not feel the leaſt fatigued.

Having received ſome packages, he employed a few ſoldiers to convey them to a carrier, judging that men of their deſcription were leaſt liable to ſuſpicion. After ſending off his goods, he ſtayed two nights with ſome relations he had there, and then ſet off for home. He had with him about an hundred weight of tea, caſed over with tow, and tightly corded up; this he put into a wallet, which he laid acroſs his ſaddle.

Coming to Cheſter-le-Street, (about halfway between Newcaſtle and Durham) he met

met at the inn an exciſeman, who knew him as ſoon as he had diſmounted, and aſked him what he had got there. Metcalf anſwered, "It is ſome tow and line for my aunt, who lives a few miles diſtant;—I wiſh ſhe was far enough for giving me the trouble to fetch it." The officer aſking him to bring it in, he replied, "For the time I ſhall ſtay it may as well remain on the horſing-ſtone." By this ſeeming indifference about his package, he removed ſuſpicion from the mind of the exciſeman, who aſſiſted in re-placing it acroſs the ſaddle; when he purſued his journey, and got home in ſafety.

Once having diſpoſed of a ſtring of horſes, he bought, with the produce, a quantity of rum, brandy, and tea, to the amount of 200l. put them on board a veſſel for Leith, and travelled over-land, on foot, to meet the veſſel there. He had about thirty miles to walk, and carried near five ſtone weight of goods which he did not chooſe to put on ſhipboard. At Leith he had the mortification to wait ſix weeks, without receiving any

tidings

tidings of the veſſel, which many ſuppoſed to have been loſt, there having been a ſtorm in the interval. The diſtreſs of mind reſulting from this, induced him once to ſay, "If ſhe is loſt, I wiſh I had been in her; for ſhe had all my property on board." Soon after, however, the ſhip got into Leith harbour. He there went on board, and ſet ſail for Newcaſtle; but another ſtorm ariſing, the mate was waſhed overboard, the mainſail carried away, and the ſhip driven near the coaſt of Norway. Deſpair now became general; the proſpect of going to the bottom ſeeming almoſt certain. He now reflected on the impiety of his wiſh reſpecting the former ſtorm; and ſo effectually was his way of thinking changed, that had he had all the current coin of the univerſe, he would have given it to have been on ſhore. It now appeared to him a dreadful thing to leave the world in the midſt of health and vigour; but the wind changing, hope began to return, and the Captain put about for the Scotch coaſt, intending to make Arbrothie. A ſig-

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nal of diſtreſs was put up, but the ſea ran ſo high, that no boat could venture out with a pilot. He then ſtood in for the harbour, but ſtruck againſt the pier end, owing to the unmanageable ſtate of the veſſel, from the loſs of her mainſail: ſhe narrowly eſcaped being bulged; but having got to the back of the pier, was towed round into the harbour, with near five feet water in her hold. Her eſcape from the mercileſs elements, however, did not ſeem to terminate her dangers, the country people ſhewing a diſpoſition to ſeize her as a wreck, and plunder her; but fortunately there was at hand a party, conſiſting of an officer and twenty men, of Pulteney's regiment, who had been in purſuit of ſome ſmugglers; and Metcalf knowing them well, (Colonel Thornton's company being attached to that regiment) the officer ſent three files of men to protect the veſſel, while the crew were removing the goods to a warehouſe.

As this veſſel ſtood in need of repairs, Metcalf put his goods on board another,

and

and in her got to Newcaſtle. There he met with an acquaintance; and from the ſeeming cordiality at the meeting, he thought he might have truſted his life in the hands of this man. With this impreſſion, Metcalf opened to him the ſtate of his affairs; informing him that he had got four hundred gallons of gin and brandy, for which he had a permit, and about thirty gallons for which he had none, and which he wanted to land; telling him, at the ſame time, of the harraſſing voyage he had juſt finiſhed: But, it ſeems, his misfortunes were only about to commence; for, in a quarter of an hour, he found that the man whom he had taken for a friend had gone down to the quay ſide, and, giving information of what he knew, had all the goods ſeized, and brought on ſhore. Metcalf imagined that none were ſeizable but the ſmall part for which he had not obtained a permit; but was ſoon undeceived, the whole being liable to ſeizure, as not agreeing with the ſpecified quantity.

He

He then repaired to the Cuſtom-Houſe, and applied to Mr. Sunderland, the Collector. This gentleman knew Metcalf, (being in the habit of viſiting Harrogate) and received him very kindly; but informed him, with much concern, that it was not in his power to ſerve him, the captors being the exciſe people, and not of his department.—He, however, ſuggeſted, that ſome good might reſult from an application to Alderman Peireth, with whom Metcalf was acquainted, and who was particularly intimate with the Collector of the Exciſe. The good Alderman gave him a letter to the Collector; repreſenting, as inſtructed by Metcalf, that the bearer had bought four hundred gallons of ſpirits, at the Cuſtom-Houſe at Aberdeen; and that the extra quantity was for the purpoſe of treating the ſailors and other friends, as well as for ſea-ſtock for himſelf. At firſt the Collector told him that nothing could be done for him, until he ſhould write up to the Board, and receive an anſwer; but Metcalf remonſtrating on the inconvenience of the delay,

delay, and the other re-conſidering the letter, he agreed to come down to the quay at four o'clock in the afternoon, which he accordingly did, and releaſed every thing without expence.

A ſhort time after the regiment called the Queen's Bays were raiſed, they were quartered at Knareſborough and the adjacent towns; but, after a ſhort ſtay, they were ordered to the North. The country people ſeemed extremely unwilling to ſupply carriages for conveying the baggage; the King's allowance being but nine-pence a mile, per ton; that of the County, one ſhilling in the Weſt Riding, and fifteen-pence in the North Riding. Metcalf having two waggons, (one of them covered) had a mind to try this new buſineſs; and, to make ſure of the job, got the ſoldiers to *preſs* his two carriages, which were accordingly loaded, himſelf attending them to Durham. Previous to loading, however, the country people, who knew the advantage of carrying for the army, and who had kept back, in hopes of an advance in the price,

price, came forward with their waggons, in oppoſition to Metcalf; but the ſoldiers would employ no other.

Arriving at Durham, he met Bland's Dragoons, on their march from the North to York: they loaded his waggons again for Northallerton, and would willingly have engaged them to York; but this he was obliged to decline, having promiſed to bring twenty-three wool-packs to Knareſborough. He was juſt ſix days in performing this journey; and cleared, with eight horſes and the one he rode, no leſs a ſum than twenty pounds; though many people were afraid to travel with ſoldiers.

Some time after the Queen's regiment had got to Durham, it received the uſual annual recruit of four horſes to a troop. The regiment having been ſo lately raiſed, had no old horſes: nevertheleſs, four were to be ſold from each. Metcalf had notice ſent him of the ſale, but did not receive the letter until the day before it commenced.—He ſet off, however, that afternoon, for Durham, and riding all night, got there by day-break.

His firſt buſineſs was to become acquainted with the farriers; ſo getting about half-a-dozen of them together, and plying them heartily with gin, he began to queſtion them as to the horſes which were to be ſold.

Amongſt the number to be diſpoſed of, was a grey one, belonging to one of the drums. The man who had the charge of him not having been ſufficiently careful in trimming him, had burnt him ſeverely, which cauſed a prodigious ſwelling. Had this careleſs conduct been known to his ſuperiors, he would have been puniſhed for it: upon that account the matter was huſhed up. Metcalf, however, being apprized of the real cauſe, in the courſe of his converſation with the farriers, determined to purchaſe him, judging that they would be deſirous to part with him at any price; and in this conjecture he was not miſtaken.

The ſale began by bringing out ſeven bay horſes; ſix of which a gentleman bought for a carriage, and Metcalf purchaſed the ſeventh.

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They then brought forward the grey horſe with his ſwelled ſheath, which excited many jokes and much laughter among the ſpectators.—Our chapman bought him alſo, at the very low price of 3l. 15s. od. which was firſt affixed by the auctioneer, but which, however, the people ſaid was very much beyond his value.

Having uſed ſuch applications as he thought efficacious for his recovery, by the time he had got him home he had the ſatisfaction to find him perfectly ſound; and within a week afterwards refuſed fifteen guineas for him.—He kept him many years as a draught-horſe; and the other horſe alſo was ſold to a profit, by which he thought himſelf very well paid for his journey to Durham.

In the year 1751 Metcalf commenced a new employ:—He ſet up a ſtage-waggon between York and Knareſborough, being the firſt on that road, and conducted it conſtantly himſelf, twice a week in the ſummer ſeaſon, and once in winter; and this buſineſs,

together with the occaſional conveyance of army baggage, employed his attention until the period of his firſt contracting for the making of roads, which ſuiting him better, he diſpoſed of his draught, and intereſt in the road, to one Guiſeley.

An act of Parliament having been obtained to make a turnpike-road from Harrogate to Boroughbridge, a perſon of the name of Oſtler, of Farnham, was appointed ſurveyor; and Metcalf falling into company with him, agreed to make about three miles of it, viz. between Minſkip and Fearnſby.—The materials were to be procured from one gravel-pit for the whole length: he therefore provided deal boards, and erected a temporary houſe at the pit, took a dozen horſes to the place, fixed racks and mangers; and hired a houſe for his men at Minſkip, which was diſtant about three-quarters of a mile. He often walked from Knareſborough in the morning, with four or five ſtone of meat on his ſhoulders, and joined his men by ſix o'clock: and by the means he uſed, he completed

pleted the work much ſooner than was expected, to the entire ſatisfaction of the ſurveyor and truſtees.

During his leiſure hours he ſtudied meaſurement in a way of his own; and when certain of the girt and length of any piece of timber, he was able to reduce its true contents to feet and inches; and would bring the dimenſions of any building into yards or feet.

Near the time of his finiſhing this road, the building of a bridge was advertiſed to be contracted for, at Boroughbridge; and a number of gentlemen met for that purpoſe at the Crown inn there. Metcalf, amongſt others, went alſo. The maſons varied conſiderably in their eſtimates. Oſtler, the ſurveyor of the roads, was appointed to ſurvey the bridge; and Metcalf told him that he wiſhed to undertake it, though he had never done any thing of the kind before. On this, the ſurveyor acquainted the gentlemen with what Metcalf had propoſed; when he was ſent for, and aſked what he knew

about a bridge: he told them, that he could readily deſcribe it, if they would take the trouble of writing down his plan, which was as follows: "The ſpan of the arch, 18 feet, being a ſemi-circle, makes 27: the arch-ſtones muſt be a foot deep, which if multiplied by 27, will be 486; and the baſes will be 72 feet more.—This for the arch: it will require good backing; for which purpoſe there are proper ſtones in the old Roman wall at Aldborough, which may be brought, if you pleaſe to give directions to that effect." The gentlemen were ſurpriſed at his readineſs, and agreed with him for building the bridge. The perſons who had given in their eſtimates, were much offended; and as the ſtone was to be procured from Renton, a ſale-quarry belonging to one of the maſons who were there, he was unwilling to ſell any to Metcalf; upon which he went to Farnham, and found good ſtones, which the lime-burners had left, (being too ſtrong for their purpoſe,) got them dreſſed at the place for little money, conveyed them to Borough-

bridge,

bridge, and having men to take them off the carriages, ſet them, and completed the arch in one day; and finiſhed the whole in a very ſhort period.

Soon after, there was a mile and an half of turnpike-road to be made between Knareſborough-Bridge and Harrogate, which Metcalf alſo agreed for. Going one day over a place covered with graſs, he told his men that he thought it different from the ground adjoining, and would have them try for ſtone or gravel, which they immediately did, and found an old cauſeway, ſuppoſed to have been made in the time of the Romans, which afforded many materials proper for the purpoſe of making the road. Between the Foreſt-Lane head and Knareſborough-Bridge, there was a bog, in a low piece of ground, over which to have paſſed was the neareſt way; and the ſurveyor thought it impoſſible to make a road over it: but Metcalf aſſured him that he could readily accompliſh it.—The other then told him, that if ſo, he ſhould be paid for the ſame length as if he had gone round.

round. Jack ſet about it, caſt the road up, and covered it with whin, and ling; and made it as good, or better, than any part he had undertaken. He received about four hundred pounds for the road and a ſmall bridge which he had built over a brook called Stanbeck.

There was an old houſe at Harrogate, with ſome fields belonging to it, and denominated a meſſuage, which was of more value, as having common-right upon the Foreſt. It belonged to an old woman, and at her deceaſe to her huſband. Metcalf went to the latter, and bought his contingent right in the houſe and land; and the old woman came to him ſoon after, to ſell her life-eſtate in it alſo. They agreed; and including both the net ſum amounted to eighty pounds. In about three weeks after this purchaſe, he ſold it for upwards of two hundred pounds.

A road being projected between Harrogate and Harewood-Bridge, ſix miles in length, a meeting was held, (the late Lord Harewood, then Mr. Laſcelles, being one of the

the party) to contract with any perſon who might be thought proper to make it. A great number of eſtimates were delivered, but Metcalf obtained the contract. It was to be completed before the winter ſet in; and being a ſtiff-clay ſoil, it was judged expedient to caſt the whole length before they began to ſtone it: on theſe accounts he agreed with the gentlemen, that no carriages ſhould paſs whilſt the road was making; and, by way of prevention, had ſluices cut at each end of the lane, and wooden bridges, which he took up occaſionally, thrown acroſs, for his own carriages to paſs over with the materials. He alſo hired two houſes, at a diſtance from each other on the road, to entertain ſtrangers who travelled on horſe-back, and the people employed in the under-taking, as there were not ſufficient in the country. The ſhort period he had contracted to complete the work in, obliging him to uſe the readieſt methods, he had a wheel-plough drawn by nine horſes through the foreſt, as the beſt and moſt expeditious way to get up

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the roots of whin and ling, in parts where they were ſtrong; and being obliged to ſuperintend the progreſs of the work, he obtained leave from the innkeepers at Harrogate to engage a ſubſtitute in his abſence. He completed his contract in the time allowed, to the ſatisfaction of the gentlemen truſtees, and of the ſurveyor; and received for the work twelve hundred pounds.

There then being about a mile and an half of road to be made through part of Chapel-Town to Leeds, Lord Harewood and other gentlemen met at the Bowling-Green in Chapel-Town, to receive eſtimates;—and Metcalf got the contract. He alſo widened the arch of Sheepſcar-Bridge; and received for that and the road together near four hundred pounds.

Between Skipton and Colne in Lancaſhire there were four miles of road to be made, and eſtimates were advertiſed for. A number of gentlemen met, and Metcalf's propoſals had the preference. The materials were at a greater diſtance, and more difficult

to

to be procured, than he expected; and a wet ſeaſon coming on, made this a bad bargain; yet he completed it according to contract.

He next engaged for two miles on the Burnleigh road, which he completed; but was not more a gainer.

He then agreed for two miles of road which lay through Broughton to Martin; and two miles more which lay through Addingham, and over part of Romell's Moor. The ſame truſtees acted for thoſe roads, as for that of Colne. Theſe he completed, and received one thouſand three hundred and fifty pounds from Mr. Ingham of Burnleigh and Mr. Alcock of Skipton.

After this, a meeting was held at Wakefield, to contract for making part of the road between that town and Halifax.—Metcalf engaged for four miles which lay between Mill-Bridge and Belly-Bridge; and finiſhed this alſo, though it was an extremely wet ſummer.—He then took three miles more which lay between Belly-Bridge and Halifax, and completed it.—And alſo agreed

for

for five miles which lay between Wakefield and Checkingley-Beck, near Dewſbury.

The truſtees of the road, (Sir Rowland Winn, —— Smith and W. Roebuck, Eſqrs.) meeting at Wakefield, to let part of the road leading to Pontefract, and likewiſe from Wakefield to Doncaſter, Metcalf took three miles and an half which lay between Hag-Bridge and Pontefract, and one mile and an half on the Doncaſter road, from Croſton through Foulby; all which he completed. The road from Wakefield, to Pontefract, Doncaſter, and Halifax, being under the management of one company of truſtees, Mr. Allen Johnſon was treaſurer for one part, John Mills, Eſq; for another, both of Wakefield; and Mr. Valentine Stead, and Mr. William Cook, for the other parts: By the payment of theſe four gentlemen he received ſix thouſand four hundred pounds.

A road was then advertiſed to be let from Wakefield to Auſterland, intended to lead through Horbury, Almondbury, Huddersfield, Marſden, and Saddleworth. A meeting

ing was held at Huddersfield, for the purpoſe. Sir John Kaye, Colonel Radcliffe, 'Squire Farrer, and ſeveral other gentlemen attended, and Metcalf agreed with them from Black-Moor Foot to Marſden, and from thence to Standiſh-Foot; alſo from Lupſet-Gate, thro' Horbury, about two miles and an half. At that time none of the road was marked out, except between Marſden and Standiſh-Foot, leading over a common called Pule and Standiſh: the ſurveyor took it over deep marſhes; but Metcalf not expecting it to have been carried that way, thought it a great hardſhip, and complained to the gentlemen, alledging it would be a much greater expence: they anſwered, that if he could make a complete road, he ſhould not be a loſer; and they were of opinion, that it would be neceſſary to dig the earth quite out of the marſhes, until they came to a ſolid bottom.—Metcalf, on calculating that each marſh, upon an average, being three yards deep, and fourteen broad, would make two hundred and ninety-four ſolid yards of earth

in every rood, which, to have carried away, would have been extremely tedious and expenſive—and not only ſo, but that the road lying Eaſt and Weſt, would fill with ſnow in winter, (as it uſually falls in that direction, when the wind is in the North)—argued the point privately with the ſurveyor and ſeveral of the gentlemen: but they all ſeemed immoveable in their former opinion. Metcalf then appeared at the public meeting, and the ſubject was again brought forward; but knowing that it would be to little purpoſe to hold a conteſt with them, he ſaid, "Gentlemen, as you ſeem to have a great deal of buſineſs before you to-day, it appears quite unneceſſary to treſpaſs upon your time on this head:—I propoſe to make the road over the marſhes, after my own plan; and if it does not anſwer, I will be at the expence of making it over again, after your's:" which was conſented to. And as he had engaged to make nine miles of the road in ten months, he began in ſix different parts, with near four hundred men employed. One of the

places

places was Pule and Standiſh common, which he caſt fourteen yards wide, and raiſed in a circular form. Water in ſeveral places ran acroſs the road, which he carried off by drains; but found the greateſt difficulty in conveying ſtones to the places for the purpoſe, on account of the ſoftneſs of the ground. Numbers of clothiers uſually going that way to Huddersfield market, were by no means ſparing in their cenſure, and held much diverſity of opinion relative to its completion. But Metcalf got the piece levelled to the end, and then ordered his men to bind heather, or ling, in round bundles, and directed them to lay it on the intended road, by placing the bundles in ſquares of four, and laying another upon each ſquare, preſſing them well down. He then brought broad-wheeled carts, and began to lead ſtone and gravel for covering. When the firſt load was brought and laid on, and the horſes had gone off in ſafety, the company huzza'd from ſurpriſe. They completed the whole of this length, which was about half a mile; and it was ſo particularly

fine, that any perſon might have gone over it in winter, unſhod, without being wet. This piece of road needed no repairs for twelve years afterwards. Having finiſhed the nine miles within the limited time, he took three miles from Standiſh to Thurſton Clough, which he completed;—and afterwards ſix miles and an half from Sir John Kaye's ſeat to Huddersfield; and from thence to Long-royd and Bridge toll-bar, about a mile and an half;—alſo four bridges, their ſpans twenty-four feet each; together with ſix bridges, the ſpans of which were nine feet each. When all this work was finiſhed, (the gentlemen having promiſed that he ſhould be no loſer) a meeting was called, and Metcalf attended: he aſſured them that the work he had completed extra to his firſt bargain, in the marſhes and other places, deſerved five hundred pounds: after ſome debate, he was allowed three hundred pounds; though it was well worth the firſt-named ſum. He had made about twenty-one miles in the whole, for which he received four thouſand five hundred pounds.

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In the building of bridges, where the foundations were bad, he laid on a ſufficient thickneſs of ling where it could be got, otherwiſe of wheat ſtraw; he next laid planks five inches thick, with ſquare mortiſes cut through; and driving in a number of piles, he made the foundation ſecure.—He then laid ſprings for the arch upon the planks, which cauſed all to ſettle regularly when the weight came on. And though he built many arches, of different ſizes, by taking this method none ever fell.

He undertook three turnpike-houſes upon the Wakefield and Auſterland roads, and completed them all. Believing there was a ſtone-quarry on the South-Eaſt ſide of Huddersfield, in ground belonging to Sir John Ramſden, he bored ſecretly in the night-time before he undertook the road, and was ſucceſsful in finding it. After finiſhing the road, having ſome vacant time, and having likewiſe diſcovered the quarry, Sir John gave him liberty to lead away ſtone. He now took houſes to build, particularly one belong-

ing to Mr. Marmaduke Hebdin, nine yards wide, twenty-three yards long, and twenty-one feet from the foundation to the ſquare of the building;—it had twenty chimnies or pipes: And this he alſo completed.

He undertook the road from Dock-Lane head, in Yorkſhire, to Aſhton-under-Line, in Lancaſhire; alſo from the guide-poſt near the latter place, to Stockport, in Cheſhire; and alſo between Stockport and Mottram-Longdale: the whole length being eighteen miles. He ſet men to work in different parts, with horſes and carts to each company; and though he loſt twenty horſes in one winter, he was not diſcouraged; obſerving that "horſe-leather had been dear a long time, but he hoped now to reduce the price." Notwithſtanding this misfortune, he completed the whole, including a great number of drains and arches, which were all done to the ſatisfaction of the truſtees and ſurveyor; and received for the work four thouſand five hundred pounds.

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He then took eight miles more which required ſeveral drains and arches.—He raiſed one hollow nine yards, and built ſufficiently on each ſide to keep up the earth, with battlements on the top; for which he received two thouſand pounds.

One day being met by Sir Geo. Warren, who inquired if he was at leiſure, and being anſwered in the affirmative, he deſired to ſee him at his houſe at Poynton. Metcalf went, and agreed to make about five miles of a private road through the Park. He took twelve or fourteen horſes of his own, and brought large quantities of ſtone into Sir George's grounds, for the uſe of draining. For this he received ſeveral hundred pounds, and great favours alſo from Sir George and his lady.

A road was to be made between Whaley and Buxton, in Derbyſhire, to avoid a hill: it went over a tedious piece of ground called Peeling Moſs; the whole road being four miles in length, with ſome part ſtrong rock, which was to be blaſted with gunpowder.—

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In taking this road, Metcalf met with ſtrong oppoſition from a ſon of one of the commiſſioners; but Peter Legh, Eſq; of Lyme, and another gentleman, ſupporting Metcalf, he gained the point, and completed the undertaking, with ſeveral drains and fence walls; for which he received near eleven hundred pounds.

He next took a mile and an half of High-Flats, between Huddersfield and Sheffield; and finiſhed it likewiſe, to the amount of three hundred pounds.

Eight miles of road were next advertiſed to be made between Huddersfield and Halifax. A meeting was held, and ſeveral perſons attended with eſtimates for making it. One part was very rocky, and full of hollows, and the ground in a very bad ſituation, particularly between Elland and Salterſhebble, and through a place called Grimſcar Wood, which was very boggy and rough. Many were of opinion that it was impoſſible to make a road over that ground. But by building up the hollows, and lowering the hills,

hills, Metcalf accompliſhed it:—And it is worthy of remark, that he never undertook any road which he did not complete, altho' he has taken many which perſons who had their ſight durſt not engage in. He finiſhed the road, with a great number of fence walls and drains, to the ſatisfaction of the ſurveyors and truſtees, and received for it two thouſand ſeven hundred and eleven pounds.

A little after this, a road was advertiſed to be made between Congleton and the Red-Bull Inn, in Cheſhire, about ſix miles in length; but the materials were about three miles diſtant in ſeveral places. A meeting for letting this road was held at a place called Auderſley, which Metcalf attended; and being a ſtranger in that part, he fortunately met with three gentlemen who knew him, viz. —— Clows of Macclesfield, —— Downs of Sigleigh, and —— Wright of Mottram, Eſqrs. two of them Juſtices of the Peace.—They ſaid to the truſtees, "Gentlemen, you have only to agree with this man, and you may be aſſured of having your work well done."

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The road, however, was not let that day, the buſineſs being deferred until another meeting to be held at Congleton, where Metcalf and others attended with eſtimates.—"Gentlemen," ſaid Metcalf, "I am a ſtranger to you, and you may with reaſon queſtion my performing the bargain; but to prevent any doubt, I will firſt do one hundred pounds worth of work, and afterwards be reaſonably paid as it goes forward; the hundred pounds may lay in the treaſurer's hands till the whole is completed, and then to be paid." On this propoſal, and the three gentlemen's recommendation at the former meeting, they agreed with him, although there was an eſtimate given in lower than his by two hundred pounds. He completed the road, to the great ſatisfaction of the ſurveyor and truſtees, and received three thouſand pounds.

During the time that Metcalf was engaged in making this road, having one day occaſion to ſtop at Congleton, he met, at the Swan inn there, one Warburton, a capital farmer, who lived about a mile diſtant. This man

was

was remarkable for ſporting large ſums in various ways, and no ſooner ſaw Metcalf, than he accoſted him thus: "I underſtand that you play at cards."—Metcalf replied, "Sometimes, but not often;" being much ſurpriſed that a ſtranger ſhould know he had that propenſity. Warburton offered to play him for five or ten pounds, the beſt of five games at put; but this he thought fit to decline: in the preſence of his friends he would not have feared to play for twenty; but being in a ſtrange place, and having a large undertaking relative to the turnpikes, he concluded that it would be highly imprudent to game. The farmer, however, perſiſting in his deſire for play, Metcalf, after a little conſideration, determined to try the effect of ridicule on his new acquaintance, ſaying, "I have not now time; but if you will meet me here this day fortnight, I will play you, the beſt of five games, for a leg of mutton, four-pennyworth of cabbage, and five ſhillings worth of punch." The farmer, pleaſed with any proſpect of engaging him,

him, agreed to the wager, and inſiſted that the money ſhould be depoſited with the landlord; which was accordingly done. During the interval, Warburton ſpread the ſtory of his engagement to play with a blind man; and, thinking it a good joke, invited many of his friends to the entertainment. Metcalf came at the time fixed, having firſt engaged a friend from Buxton to accompany him, whoſe chief buſineſs it was to ſee that his adverſary did not play tricks with the cards. Three guineas to two were offered to be laid on Warburton; and Metcalf's friend obſerving this, expreſſed a wiſh to take the odds, if agreeable to him: to this, Metcalf replied, that he meant only to amuſe himſelf by playing for mutton and cabbage; and, that if any ſums were laid, he would forfeit his wager. When all parties were aſſembled, Metcalf, out of joke, propoſed to his adverſary to club for all the articles, and treat the company; but this he poſitively refuſed, alledging that he had collected his friends for the purpoſe of ſeeing the match played.

played. On this, Metcalf called to the landlord for a fiddle, and playing on it for a little while, was aſked by the farmer what he meant: "To enable you," ſaid he, "to tell your children, that when you played with a blind man, you *played to ſome tune!*" They then went into a large room, and were followed by a crowd of people, amongſt whom were two Juſtices of the Peace, and ſeveral clergymen. The game now began, and Metcalf won the two firſt; his adverſary got the third, and pulling out his purſe, offered to lay five guineas on the rubber: this was a tickling offer to Metcalf, but having reſolved againſt playing for money, he made ſhift to overcome the temptation. Metcalf won the next game; and, of courſe, the rubber. On this the farmer laid a large ſum on the table, and offered to play for the amount; but Metcalf would only play for liquor, for the good of the company. The farmer agreeing, they began again, and Metcalf preſently won two games, when a gentleman preſent ſhewed a great deſire to play with him for money,

but in vain; ſo winning this rubber alſo, he ſaddled his antagoniſt with the whole ſcore, and not ſatisfied with the triumph already gained, began to banter him ſorely on his *childiſh* manner of playing, and telling him, that when the road work ſhould ceaſe for the Chriſtmas holidays, he would come to his houſe, and teach him to play like a *man*.

The quantity of liquor yet to come in being large, detained many of the company until five in the morning; and Warburton, who had got pretty drunk, by way of comfort, declared before parting, that of twenty-two fine cows, he would rather have loſt the beſt, than have been beaten ſo publicly.

Metcalf apprehending that he might now be ſolicited by many to engage in play, and conſidering the importance of his other engagements, called aſide Mr. Rolle, the ſurveyor of the road, and begged of him to give ſixpence, upon condition of receiving five pounds, if he (Metcalf) ſhould play any more at cards for eighteen months, the time allotted to finiſh the road. Mr. Rolle approving

ving highly of this, they returned to the company, and Metcalf making the propoſal, received the ſurveyor's ſixpence publicly; and thus put an end to all further importunity.

Here Metcalf finds it his duty to ſuſpend, for a while, his road-making narrative, to introduce, for the laſt time, the mention of the much-loved Partner of his cares, whom he had brought into Cheſhire, and left at Stockport, that ſhe might avail herſelf of the medical advice of a perſon there, famed for the cure of rheumatic complaints, of which deſcription her's was thought to be:—But human aid proving ineffectual, ſhe there died, in the ſummer 1778, after thirty-nine years of conjugal felicity, which was never interrupted but by her illneſs or his occaſional abſence.

In his treatment of her, Metcalf never loſt ſight of the original diſtinction in their circumſtances, always indulging her to the utmoſt that his own would allow; but ſhe had no unreaſonable deſires to gratify. She died in the ſixty-firſt year of her age, leaving four children; and was buried in Stockport church-yard.

In 1781 the road between Wetherby and Knaresborough was let.—He undertook that part which led through Ribston and Kirk-Deighton, till it joined the great North road leading from Boroughbridge to Wetherby; and also built two toll-houses upon the road; and received about three hundred and eighty pounds.

Metcalf had a daughter married in Cheshire, to a person in the stocking business. The manufacturers in this line, in the neighbourhood of Stockport, talked of getting loads of money; and Metcalf thought that he would have a portion of it also: he accordingly got six jennies and a carding engine made, with other utensils proper for the business; bought a quantity of cotton, and spun yarn for sale, as several others did in the country. But it cost him much trouble and expence, before he got all his utensils fixed: the speculation likewise failed; and a time came when no yarn could be sold without loss. Then Metcalf got looms, and other implements proper for weaving calicoes, jeans, and velverets:—for having made the cotton business an object

of

of particular attention, he was become very well acquainted with the various branches of it. He got a quantity of calicoes whitened and printed, his velverets cut, dyed, &c. and having ſpun up all his cotton, he ſet off with about eight hundred yards of finiſhed goods, intending to ſell them in Yorkſhire, which he did at Knareſborough and in the neighbourhood; and his ſon-in-law was to employ his jennies until he came back. On his return, coming to Marſden near Huddersfield, where he had made a road ſome years before, he found that there was to be a meeting, to let the making of a mile and an half of road, and the building of a bridge over the river that runs by the town, ſo as to leave the former road, in order to avoid the ſteepneſs of a hill. At the perſuaſion of ſome of his friends, he ſtaid till the meeting, and agreed with the truſtees. The bridge was to be twelve yards in the ſpan, and nine yards in breadth. Theſe too he completed, and received a thouſand pounds; but the ſeaſon being wet, and the ground over which he had to bring his materials very ſwampy, and at a diſtance from the road, he loſt conſiderably by it. In

In 1789 he was informed that there was a great quantity of road to be let in Lancaſhire: he accordingly went, and took a part between Bury and Eſlington, and another part from Eſlington to Ackrington; as alſo a branch from that to Blackburn. There were ſuch hollows to fill, and hills to be taken down, to form the level, as was never done before: in ſeveral of the hollows the walls were ten yards high, before the battlements were put on the top. He had two ſummers allowed to finiſh this work in; but the trade in Lancaſhire being briſk, made wages very high, and the navigation at that time cutting through the country ſo employed the men, that it was a very difficult matter to procure a ſufficiency of hands. The firſt ſummer the rains were ſo perpetual, that he loſt about two hundred pounds; but in the next he completed the whole work, and received by the hands of Mr. Carr of Blackburn three thouſand five hundred pounds; and, after all, was forty pounds loſer by it.

In the year 1792 he returned into Yorkſhire; and having no engagement to employ his

his attention, he bought hay to ſell again, meaſuring the ſtacks with his arms; and having learnt the height, he could readily tell what number of ſquare yards were contained, from five to one hundred pounds value. Sometimes he bought a little wood-ſtanding; and if he could get the girth and height, would calculate the ſolid contents.

From that period he has ſettled on a ſmall holding at Spofforth, near Wetherby; and his houſe is kept by a daughter and ſon-in-law.

At Chriſtmas, 1794, he paid a viſit to the preſent Colonel Thornton, and his mother, at Thornville-Royal; and the reception he met with was ſuch as fully reminded him of former days at Old Thornville, where he had ſpent many Chriſtmaſſes. The truly reſpectable Relict, and the worthy Repreſentative, of his late Commander, always receive Blind Jack with a condeſcending affability, highly flattering to one in his humble ſtation.

Having known the ſtreets of York very accurately in the earlier part of his life, he determined, on the commencement of the laſt year, to viſit once more that ancient city, where

where he had not been for the ſpace of thirty-two years: He found alterations for the better in Spurriergate, Blakeſtreet, the Pavement, &c. and being now in the neighbourhood of Middlethorp, where he had, in the year 1735, ſpent a half-year ſo happily, he reſolved to have another *look* at it, in the poſſeſſion of its preſent worthy maſter. From Mr. Barlow's houſe there is a road which leads to Biſhopthorpe; and this road he clearly recollected, though ſixty years had elapſed ſince he had gone that way before: ſo retentive was his memory on this occaſion, that he diſcovered an alteration in the hanging of two gates by a wall-ſide near the above manſion. At Mr. Barlow's he ſtaid ſeveral nights, which, he ſcarcely need add, were ſpent moſt agreeably, he endeavouring to make his fiddle ſpeak the ſatisfaction and hilarity felt by its owner. Returning to York, he ſpent a few nights at the houſe of another friend; and ſetting out on the 10th of January, 1795, he walked to Green-Hammerton, in his way to Thornville-Royal, in about three hours and an half, being

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ten miles; proceeded to Thornville that night, and to Knareſborough next morning the 10th, which being the birth-day of Sir Thomas Slingſby's eldeſt ſon, and which was kept with the utmoſt feſtivity, he reſolved to ſpend at the worthy Baronet's. Here he cloſed the feſtive ſeaſon of Chriſtmas, after a tour of ſome weeks amongſt his friends;— to whom, in particular, he ſubmits, with the utmoſt deference, this imperfect Sketch of a LIFE, with which only can terminate his grateful remembrance of their numerous favours.

FINIS.

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